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Death Warrant of Major André.

From a painting by A. Chappel.

Author's Autograph Edition

LIFE OF GEORGE WASHINGTON

BY WASHINGTON IRVING

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Life of
George Washington

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Life of George Washington

LIFE OF WASHINGTON.

Chapter II.

North Carolina—Difficulties of its Invasion—Character of the People and Country—Sumter, his Character and Story—Rocky Mount—Hanging Rock—Slow Advance of De Kalb—Gates Takes Command—Desolate March—Battle of Camden—Flight of Gates—Sumter Surprised by Tarleton at the Waxhaws—Washington's Opinion of Militia—His Letter to Gates.

LORD CORNWALLIS, when left in military command at the South by Sir Henry Clinton, was charged, it will be recollected, with the invasion of North Carolina. It was an enterprise in which much difficulty was to be apprehended, both from the character of the people and the country. The original settlers were from various parts, most of them men who had experienced polit-

ical or religious oppression, and had brought with them a quick sensibility to wrong, a stern appreciation of their rights, and an indomitable spirit of freedom and independence. In the heart of the State was a hardy Presbyterian stock, the Scotch Irish, as they were called, having emigrated from Scotland to Ireland, and thence to America; and who were said to possess the impulsiveness of the Irishman, with the dogged resolution of the Covenanter.

The early history of the colony abounds with instances of this spirit among its people. "They always behaved insolently to their governors," complains Governor Barrington in 1731; "some they have driven out of the country—at other times they set up a government of their own choice, supported by men under arms." It was in fact the spirit of popular liberty and self-government which stirred within them, and gave birth to the glorious axiom: "The rights of the many against the exactions of the few." So ripe was this spirit at an early day, that when the boundary line was run, in 1727, between North Carolina and Virginia, the borderers were eager to be included within the former province, "as there they paid no tribute to God or Cæsar."

It was this spirit which gave rise to the confederacy, called the Regulation, formed to

withstand the abuses of power; and the first blood shed in our country, in resistance to arbitrary taxation, was at Almance in this province, in a conflict between the regulators and Governor Tryon. Above all, it should never be forgotten, that at Mecklenburg, in the heart of North Carolina, was fulminated the first declaration of independence of the British crown, upwards of a year before a like declaration by Congress.

A population so characterized presented formidable difficulties to the invader. The physical difficulties arising from the nature of the country consisted in its mountain fastnesses in the northwestern part, its vast forests, its sterile tracts, its long rivers, destitute of bridges, and which, though fordable in fair weather, were liable to be swollen by sudden storms and freshets, and rendered deep, turbulent, and impassable. These rivers, in fact, which rushed down from the mountain, but wound sluggishly through the plains, were the military strength of the country, as we shall have frequent occasion to show in the course of our narrative.

Lord Cornwallis forbore to attempt the invasion of North Carolina until the summer heats should be over and the harvests gathered in. In the meantime he disposed of his troops

in cantonments, to cover the frontiers of South Carolina and Georgia, and maintain their internal quiet. The command of the frontiers was given by him to Lord Rawdon, who made Camden his principal post. This town, the capital of Kershaw District, a fertile, fruitful country, was situated on the east bank of the Wateree River, on the road leading to North Carolina. It was to be the grand military depot for the projected campaign.

Having made these dispositions, Lord Cornwallis set up his headquarters at Charleston, where he occupied himself in regulating the civil and commercial affairs of the province, in organizing the militia of the lower districts, and in forwarding provisions and munitions of war to Camden.

The proclamation of Sir Henry Clinton, putting an end to all neutrality, and the rigorous penalties and persecutions with which all infractions of its terms were punished, had for a time quelled the spirit of the country. By degrees, however, the dread of British power gave way to impatience of British exactions. Symptoms of revolt manifested themselves in various parts. They were encouraged by intelligence that De Kalb, sent by Washington, was advancing through North Carolina at the head of two thousand men, and that the mi-

litia of that State and of Virginia were joining his standard. This was soon followed by tidings that Gates, the conqueror of Burgoyne, was on his way to take command of the Southern forces.

The prospect of such aid from the North reanimated the Southern patriots. One of the most eminent of these was Thomas Sumter, whom the Carolinians had surnamed the Game Cock. He was between forty and fifty years of age, brave, hardy, vigorous, resolute. He had served against the Indians in his boyhood, during the old French war, and had been present at the defeat of Braddock. In the present war he had held the rank of lieutenant-colonel of riflemen in the continental line. After the fall of Charleston, when patriots took refuge in contiguous States, or in the natural fastnesses of the country, he had retired with his family into one of the latter.

The lower part of South Carolina for upwards of a hundred miles back from the sea is a level country, abounding with swamps, locked up in the windings of the rivers which flow down from the Appalachian Mountains. Some of these swamps are mere canebrakes, of little use until subdued by cultivation, when they yield abundant crops of rice. Others are covered with forests of cypress, cedar, and laurel, green

all the year and odoriferous, but tangled with vines and almost impenetrable. In their bosoms, however, are fine savannahs; natural lawns, open to cultivation, and yielding abundant pasturage. It requires local knowledge, however, to penetrate these wildernesses, and hence they form strongholds to the people of the country. In one of these natural fastnesses, on the borders of the Santee, Sumter had taken up his residence, and hence he would sally forth in various directions. During a temporary absence his retreat had been invaded, his house burnt to the ground, his wife and children driven forth without shelter. Private injury had thus been added to the incentives of patriotism. Emerging from his hiding-place, he had thrown himself among a handful of his fellow-sufferers who had taken refuge in North Carolina. They chose him at once as a leader, and resolved on a desperate struggle for the deliverance of their native State. Destitute of regular weapons, they forged rude substitutes out of the implements of husbandry. Old mill-saws were converted into broadswords; knives at the ends of poles served for lances; while the country housewives gladly gave up their pewter dishes and other utensils, to be melted down and cast into bullets for such as had firearms.

When Sumter led this gallant band of exiles over the border, they did not amount in number to two hundred; yet, with these, he attacked and routed a well-armed body of British troops and tories, the terror of the frontier. His followers supplied themselves with weapons from the slain. In a little while his band was augmented by recruits. Parties of militia, also, recently embodied under the compelling measures of Cornwallis, deserted to the patriot standard. Thus reinforced to the amount of six hundred men, he made, on the 30th of July, a spirited attack on the British post at Rocky Mount, near the Catawba, but was repulsed. A more successful attack was made by him, eight days afterwards, on another post at Hanging Rock. The Prince of Wales regiment which defended it was nearly annihilated, and a large body of North Carolina loyalists, under Colonel Brian, was routed and dispersed. The gallant exploits of Sumter were emulated in other parts of the country, and the partisan war thus commenced was carried on with an audacity that soon obliged the enemy to call in their outposts, and collect their troops in large masses.

The advance of De Kalb with reinforcements from the North, had been retarded by various difficulties, the most important of which was

want of provisions. This had been especially the case, he said, since his arrival in North Carolina. The legislative or executive power, he complained, gave him no assistance, nor could he obtain supplies from the people but by military force. There was no flour in the camp, nor were dispositions made to furnish any. His troops were reduced for a time to short allowance, and at length, on the 6th of July, brought to a positive halt at Deep River.* The North Carolina militia, under General Caswell, were already in the field, on the road to Camden, beyond the Pedee River. He was anxious to form a junction with them, and with some Virginia troops, under Colonel Porterfield, reliques of the defenders of Charleston; but a wide and sterile region lay between him and them, difficult to be traversed, unless magazines were established in advance, or he were supplied with provisions to take with him. Thus circumstanced, he wrote to Congress and to the State Legislature, representing his situation, and entreating relief. For three weeks he remained in this encampment, foraging an exhausted country for a meagre subsistence, and was thinking of deviating to the right, and seeking the fertile counties of Mecklenburg and

* A branch of Cape Fear River. The aboriginal name, Supporah.

Rowan, when, on the 25th of July, General Gates arrived at the camp.

The baron greeted him with a continental salute from his little park of artillery, and received him with the ceremony and deference due to a superior officer who was to take the command. There was a contest of politeness between the two generals. Gates approved of De Kalb's standing orders, but at the first review of the troops, to the great astonishment of the baron, gave orders for them to hold themselves in readiness to march at a *moment's warning*. It was evident he meant to signalize himself by celerity of movement in contrast with protracted delays.

It was in vain the destitute situation of the troops was represented to him, and that they had not a day's provision in advance. His reply was, that wagons laden with supplies were coming on, and would overtake them in two days.

On the 27th, he actually put the army in motion over the Buffalo Ford, on the direct road to Camden. Colonel Williams, the adjutant-general of De Kalb, warned him of the sterile nature of that route, and recommended a more circuitous one farther north, which the baron had intended to take, and which passed through the abundant county of Mecklenburg.

Gates persisted in taking the direct route, observing that he should the sooner form a junction with Caswell and the North Carolina militia; and as to the sterility of the country, his supplies would soon overtake him.

The route proved all that had been represented. It led through a region of pine barrens, sand hills, and swamps, with few human habitations, and those most deserted. The supplies of which he had spoken never overtook him. His army had to subsist itself on lean cattle, roaming almost wild in the woods; and to supply the want of bread with green Indian corn, unripe apples, and peaches. The consequence was, a distressing prevalence of dysentery.

Having crossed the Pedee River on the 3d of August, the army was joined by a handful of brave Virginia regulars, under Lieutenant-Colonel Porterfield, who had been wandering about the country since the disaster of Charleston; and, on the 7th, the much desired junction took place with the North Carolina militia. On the 13th they encamped at Rugeley's Mills, otherwise called Clermont, about twelve miles from Camden, and on the following day were reinforced by a brigade of seven hundred Virginia militia, under General Stevens.

On the approach of Gates, Lord Rawdon

had concentrated his forces at Camden. The post was flanked by the Wateree River and Pine-tree Creek, and strengthened with redoubts. Lord Cornwallis had hastened hither from Charleston on learning that affairs in this quarter were drawing to a crisis, and had arrived here on the 13th. The British effective force thus collected was something more than two thousand, including officers. About five hundred were militia and tory refugees from North Carolina.

The forces under Gates, according to the return of his adjutant-general, were three thousand and fifty-two fit for duty ; more than two thirds of them, however, were militia.

On the 14th, he received an express from General Sumter, who, with his partisan corps, after harassing the enemy at various points, was now endeavoring to cut off their supplies from Charleston. The object of the express was to ask a reinforcement of regulars to aid him in capturing a large convoy of clothing, ammunition, and stores, on its way to the garrison, and which would pass Wateree Ferry, about a mile from Camden.

Gates accordingly detached Colonel Woolford of the Maryland line, with one hundred regulars, a party of artillery, and two brass field-pieces. On the same evening he moved

with his main force to take post at a deep stream about seven miles from Camden, intending to attack Lord Rawdon or his redoubts should he march out in force to repel Sumter.

It seems hardly credible that Gates should have been so remiss in collecting information concerning the movements of his enemy as to be utterly unaware that Lord Cornwallis had arrived at Camden. Such, however, we are assured by his adjutant-general, was the fact.*

By a singular coincidence, Lord Cornwallis on the very same evening sallied forth from Camden to attack the American camp at Clermont.

About two o'clock at night, the two forces blundered, as it were, on each other about half way. A skirmish took place between their advance guards, in which Porterfield of the Virginia regulars was mortally wounded. Some prisoners were taken on either side. From these the respective commanders learnt the nature of the forces each had stumbled upon. Both halted, formed their troops for action, but deferred further hostilities until daylight.

Gates was astounded at being told that the enemy at hand was Cornwallis with three thousand men. Calling a council of war, he

* Narrative of Adjutant-General Williams.

demanded what was best to be done. For a moment or two there was blank silence. It was broken by General Stevens of the Virginia militia, with the question, "Gentlemen, is it not too late *now* to do anything but fight?" No other advice was asked or offered, and all were required to repair to their respective commands,* though General De Kalb, we are told, was of opinion that they should regain their position at Clermont, and there await an attack.

In forming the line, the first Maryland division, including the Delawares, was on the right, commanded by De Kalb. The Virginia militia under Stevens, were on the left. Caswell with the North Carolinians formed the centre. The artillery was in battery on the road. Each flank was covered by a marsh. The second Maryland brigade formed a reserve, a few hundred yards in rear of the first.

At daybreak (August 16th), the enemy were dimly descried advancing in column; they appeared to be displaying to the right. The deputy adjutant-general ordered the artillery to open a fire upon them, and then rode to General Gates, who was in the rear of the line, to inform him of the cause of the firing. Gates ordered that Stevens should advance briskly

* Narrative of Adjutant-General Williams.

with his brigade of Virginia militia and attack them while in the act of displaying. No sooner did Stevens receive the order than he put his brigade in motion, but discovered that the right wing of the enemy was already in line. A few sharp-shooters were detached to run forward, post themselves behind trees within forty or fifty yards of the enemy to extort their fire while at a distance, and render it less terrible to the militia. The expedient failed. The British rushed on shouting and firing. Stevens called to his men to stand firm, and put them in mind of their bayonets. His words were unheeded. The inexperienced militia, dismayed and confounded by this impetuous assault, threw down their loaded muskets and fled. The panic spread to the North Carolina militia. Part of them made a temporary stand, but soon joined with the rest in flight, rendered headlong and disastrous by the charge and pursuit of Tarleton and his cavalry.

Gates, seconded by his officers, made several attempts to rally the militia, but was borne along with them. The day was hazy; there was no wind to carry off the smoke, which hung over the field of battle like a thick cloud. Nothing could be seen distinctly. Supposing that the regular troops were dispersed like the

Battle of Camden—Death of De Kalb.

militia, Gates gave all up for lost, and retreated from the field.

The regulars, however, had not given way. The Maryland brigades and the Delaware regiment, unconscious that they were deserted by the militia, stood their ground, and bore the brunt of the battle. Though repeatedly broken, they as often rallied, and braved even the deadly push of the bayonet. At length a charge of Tarleton's cavalry on their flank threw them into confusion, and drove them into the woods and swamps. None showed more gallantry on this disastrous day than the Baron de Kalb; he fought on foot with the second Maryland brigade, and fell exhausted after receiving eleven wounds. His aide-de-camp, De Buysson, supported him in his arms and was repeatedly wounded in protecting him. He announced the rank and nation of his general, and both were taken prisoners. De Kalb died in the course of a few days, dictating in his last moments a letter expressing his affection for the officers and men of his division who had so nobly stood by him in this deadly strife.

If the militia fled too soon in this battle, said the adjutant-general, the regulars remained too long; fighting when there was no hope of victory.*

* Williams's Narrative.

General Gates in retreating, had hoped to rally a sufficient force at Clermont to cover the retreat of the regulars, but the farther they fled, the more the militia were dispersed, until the generals were abandoned by all but their aides. To add to the mortification of Gates, he learned in the course of his retreat that Sumter had been completely successful, and having reduced the enemy's redoubt on the Wateree, and captured one hundred prisoners and forty loaded wagons, was marching off with his booty on the opposite side of the river; apprehending danger from the quarter in which he had heard firing in the morning. Gates had no longer any means of co-operating with him; he sent orders to him, therefore, to retire in the best manner he could; while he himself proceeded with General Caswell towards the village of Charlotte, about sixty miles distant.

Cornwallis was apprehensive that Sumter's corps might form a rallying point to the routed army. On the morning of the 17th of August, therefore, he detached Tarleton in pursuit with a body of cavalry and light infantry, about three hundred and fifty strong. Sumter was retreating up the western side of the Wateree, much encumbered by his spoils and prisoners. Tarleton pushed up by forced and concealed marches on the eastern side. Horses

and men suffered from the intense heat of the weather. At dusk Tarleton descried the fires of the American camp about a mile from the opposite shore. He gave orders to secure all boats on the river, and to light no fire in the camp. In the morning his sentries gave word that the Americans were quitting their encampment. It was evident they knew nothing of a British force being in pursuit of them. Tarleton now crossed the Wateree; the infantry with a three-pounder passed in boats; the cavalry swam their horses where the river was not fordable. The delay in crossing, and the diligence of Sumter's march, increased the distance between the pursuers and the pursued. About noon a part of Tarleton's force gave out through heat and fatigue. Leaving them to repose on the bank of Fishing Creek, he pushed on with about one hundred dragoons, the freshest and most able; still marching with great circumspection. As he entered a valley, a discharge of small-arms from a thicket tumbled a dragoon from his saddle. His comrades galloped up to the place, and found two American videttes whom they sabred before Tarleton could interpose. A sergeant and five dragoons rode up to the summit of a neighboring hill to reconnoiter. Crouching on their horses they made signs to Tarleton. He cautiously ap-

proached the crest of the hill, and looking over beheld the American camp on a neighboring height, and apparently in a most negligent condition.

Sumter, in fact, having pressed his retreat to the neighborhood of the Catawba Ford, and taken a strong position at the mouth of Fishing Creek, and his patrols having scoured the road without discovering any signs of an enemy, considered himself secure from surprise. The two shots fired by his videttes had been heard, but were supposed to have been made by militia shooting cattle. The troops having for the last four days been almost without food or sleep, were now indulged in complete relaxation. Their arms were stacked, and they were scattered about, some strolling, some lying on the grass under the trees, some bathing in the river. Sumter himself had thrown off part of his clothes on account of the heat of the weather.

Having well reconnoitered this negligent camp, indulging in summer supineness and sultry repose, Tarleton, prepared for instant attack. His cavalry and infantry formed into one line, dashed forward with a general shout, and, before the Americans could recover from their surprise, got between them and the parade ground on which the muskets were stacked.

All was confusion and consternation in the American camp. Some opposition was made from behind baggage wagons, and there was skirmishing in various quarters, but in a little while there was a universal flight to the river and the woods. Between three and four hundred were killed and wounded; all their arms and baggage, with two brass field-pieces, fell into the hands of the enemy, who also recaptured the prisoners and booty taken at Camden. Sumter with about three hundred and fifty of his men effected a retreat; he galloped off, it is said, without saddle, hat, or coat.

Gates, on reaching the village of Charlotte, had been joined by some fugitives from his army. He continued on to Hillsborough, one hundred and eighty miles from Camden, where he made a stand and endeavored to rally his scattered forces. His regular troops, however, were little more than one thousand. As to the militia of North and South Carolina, they had dispersed to their respective homes, depending upon the patriotism and charity of the farmers along the road for food and shelter.

It was not until the beginning of September that Washington received word of the disastrous reverse at Camden. The shock was the greater, as previous reports from that quarter had represented the operations a few days pre-

ceding the action as much in our favor. It was evident to Washington that the course of war must ultimately tend to the Southern States, yet the situation of affairs in the North did not permit him to detach any sufficient force for their relief. All that he could do for the present was to endeavor to hold the enemy in check in that quarter. For this purpose, he gave orders that some regular troops enlisted in Maryland for the war, and intended for the main army, should be sent to the southward. He wrote to Governor Rutledge of South Carolina (12th September), to raise a permanent, compact, well-organized body of troops, instead of depending upon a numerous army of militia, always "inconceivably expensive, and too fluctuating and undisciplined" to oppose a regular force. He was still more urgent and explicit on this head in his letters to the President of Congress (September 15th). "Regular troops alone," said he, "are equal to the exigencies of modern war, as well for defense as offense; and whenever a substitute is attempted, it must prove illusory and ruinous. No militia will ever acquire the habits necessary to resist a regular force. The firmness requisite for the real business of fighting is only to be attained by a constant course of discipline and service. I have never yet been witness to a single in-

stance, that can justify a different opinion ; and it is most earnestly to be wished, that the liberties of America may no longer be trusted, in any material degree, to so precarious a dependence. . . . In my ideas of the true system of war at the southward, the object ought to be to have a good army, rather than a large one. Every exertion should be made by North Carolina, Virginia, Maryland, and Delaware, to raise a permanent force of six thousand men, exclusive of horse and artillery. These, with the occasional aid of the militia in the vicinity of the scene of action, will not only suffice to prevent the farther progress of the enemy, but, if properly supplied, to oblige them to compact their force and relinquish a part of what they now hold. To expel them from the country entirely is what we cannot aim at, till we derive more effectual support from abroad ; and by attempting too much, instead of going forward, we shall go backward. Could such a force be once set on foot, it would immediately make an inconceivable change in the face of affairs not only in the opposition to the enemy, but in expense, consumption of provisions, and waste of arms and stores. No magazines can be equal to the demands of an army of militia, and none need economy more than ours."

He had scarce written the foregoing, when he received a letter from the now unfortunate Gates, dated at Hillsborough, August 30th and September 3d, giving particulars of his discomfiture. No longer vaunting and vainglorious, he pleads nothing but his patriotism, and deprecates the fall which he apprehends awaits him. The appeal which he makes to Washington's magnanimity to support him in this day of his reverse, is the highest testimonial he could give to the exalted character of the man whom he once affected to underrate and aspired to supplant.

"Anxious for the public good," said he, "I shall continue my unwearied endeavors to stop the progress of the enemy, reinstate our affairs, recommence an offensive war, and recover all our losses in the Southern States. But if being unfortunate is solely a reason sufficient for removing me from command, I shall most cheerfully submit to the orders of Congress, and resign an office which few generals would be anxious to possess, and where the utmost skill and fortitude are subject to be baffled by difficulties, which must for a time surround the chief in command here. That your Excellency may meet with no such difficulties, that your road to fame and fortune may be smooth and easy, is the sincere wish of your most humble servant."

Again: "If I can yet render good service to the United States, it will be necessary it should be seen that I have the support of Congress, and of your Excellency; otherwise, some men may think they please my superiors by blaming me, and thus recommend themselves to favor. But you, sir, will be too generous to lend an ear to such men, if such there be, and will show your greatness of soul rather by protecting than slighting the unfortunate."

Washington in his reply, while he acknowledged the shock and surprise caused by the first account of the unexpected event, did credit to the behavior of the continental troops. "The accounts," added he, "which the enemy give of the action, show that their victory was dearly bought. Under present circumstances, the system which you are pursuing seems to be extremely proper. It would add no good purpose to take a position near the enemy while you are so far inferior in force. If they can be kept in check by the light irregular troops under Colonel Sumter and other active officers, they will gain nothing by the time which must be necessarily spent by you in collecting and arranging the new army, forming magazines and replacing the stores which were lost in the action."

Washington still cherished the idea of a combined attack upon New York as soon as a French naval force should arrive. The destruction of the enemy here would relieve this part of the Union from an internal war, and enable its troops and resources to be united with those of France in vigorous efforts against the common enemy elsewhere. Hearing, therefore, that the Count de Guichen, with his West India squadron, was approaching the coast, Washington prepared to proceed to Hartford in Connecticut, there to hold a conference with the Count de Rochambeau and the Chevalier de Ternay, and concert a plan for future operations, of which the attack on New York was to form the principal feature.

Chapter II.

Treason of Arnold—His Correspondence with the Enemy—His Negotiations with André—Parting Scene with Washington—Midnight Conference on the Banks of the Hudson—Return of André by Land—Circumstances of his Capture.

WE have now to enter upon a sad episode of our revolutionary history—the treason of Arnold. Of the military skill, daring enterprise, and indomitable courage of this man, ample evidence has been given in the foregoing pages. Of the implicit confidence reposed in his patriotism by Washington, sufficient proof is manifested in the command with which he was actually intrusted. But Arnold was false at heart, and, at the very time of seeking that command, had been for many months in traitorous correspondence with the enemy.

The first idea of proving recreant to the

cause he had vindicated so bravely, appears to have entered his mind when the charges preferred against him by the council of Pennsylvania were referred by Congress to a court-martial. Before that time he had been incensed against Pennsylvania; but now his wrath was excited against his country, which appeared so insensible to his services. Disappointment in regard to the settlement of his accounts, added to his irritation, and mingled sordid motives with his resentment; and he began to think how, while he wreaked his vengeance on his country, he might do it with advantage to his fortunes. With this view he commenced a correspondence with Sir Henry Clinton in a disguised handwriting, and, under the signature of Gustavus, representing himself as a person of importance in the American service, who, being dissatisfied with the late proceedings of Congress, particularly the alliance with France, was desirous of joining the cause of Great Britain, could he be certain of personal security, and indemnification for whatever loss of property he might sustain. His letters occasionally communicated articles of intelligence of some moment, which proved to be true, and induced Sir Henry to keep up the correspondence, which was conducted on his part by his aide-de-camp, Major John André,

likewise in a disguised hand, and under the signature of John Anderson.

Months elapsed before Sir Henry discovered who was his secret correspondent. Even after discovering it he did not see fit to hold out any very strong inducements to Arnold for desertion. The latter was out of command, and had nothing to offer but his services; which in his actual situation were scarcely worth buying.

In the meantime the circumstances of Arnold were daily becoming more desperate. Debts were accumulating, and creditors becoming more and more importunate, as his means to satisfy them decreased. The public reprimand he had received was rankling in his mind, and filling his heart with bitterness. Still he hesitated on the brink of absolute infamy, and attempted a half-way leap. Such was his proposition to M. de Luzerne to make himself subservient to the policy of the French government, on condition of receiving a loan equal to the amount of his debts. This he might have reconciled to his conscience by the idea that France was an ally, and its policy likely to be friendly. It was his last card before resorting to utter treachery. Failing in it, his desperate alternative was to get some important command, the betrayal of which to the enemy might obtain for him a munificent reward.

He may possibly have had such an idea in his mind some time previously, when he sought the command of a naval and military expedition, which failed to be carried into effect; but such certainly was the secret of his eagerness to obtain the command of West Point, the great object of British and American solicitude, on the possession of which were supposed by many to hinge the fortunes of the war.

He took command of the post and its dependencies about the beginning of August, fixing his headquarters at Beverley, a country seat a little below West Point, on the opposite or eastern side of the river. It stood in a lonely part of the Highlands, high up from the river, yet at the foot of a mountain covered with woods. It was commonly called the Robinson House, having formerly belonged to Washington's early friend, Colonel Beverley Robinson, who had obtained a large part of the Phillipse estate in this neighborhood, by marrying one of the heiresses. Colonel Robinson was a royalist; had entered into the British service, and was now residing in New York, and Beverley with its surrounding lands had been confiscated.

From this place Arnold carried on a secret correspondence with Major André. Their let-

ters, still in disguised hands, and under the names of Gustavus and John Anderson, purported to treat merely of commercial operations, but the real matter in negotiation was the betrayal of West Point and the Highlands to Sir Henry Clinton. This stupendous piece of treachery was to be consummated at the time when Washington, with the main body of his army would be drawn down towards King's Bridge, and the French troops landed on Long Island, in the projected co-operation against New York. At such time, a flotilla under Rodney, having on board a large land force, was to ascend the Hudson to the Highlands, which would be surrendered by Arnold almost without opposition, under pretext of insufficient force to make resistance. The immediate result of his surrender, it was anticipated, would be the defeat of the combined attempt upon New York; and its ultimate effect might be the dismemberment of the Union and the dislocation of the whole American scheme of warfare.

We have before had occasion to mention Major André, but the part which he took in this dark transaction, and the degree of romantic interest subsequently thrown around his memory, call for a more specific notice of him. He was born in London, in 1751, but his

parents were of Geneva, in Switzerland, where he was educated. Being intended for mercantile life, he entered a London counting-house, but had scarce attained his eighteenth year when he formed a romantic attachment to a beautiful girl, Miss Honora Sneyd, by whom his passion was returned, and they became engaged. This sadly unfitted him for the sober routine of the counting-house. "All my mercantile calculations," writes he in one of his boyish letters, "go to the tune of dear Honora."

The father of the young lady interfered, and the premature match was broken off. André abandoned the counting-house and entered the army. His first commission was dated March 4th, 1771; but he subsequently visited Germany, and returned to England in 1773, still haunted by his early passion. His lady love, in the meantime, had been wooed by other admirers, and in the present year became the second wife of Richard Lovell Edgeworth, a young widower of twenty-six.*

André came to America in 1774, as lieutenant of the Royal English Fusileers; and was among the officers captured at Saint John's, early in the war, by Montgomery. He still bore about with him a memento of

*Father, by his first marriage, of the celebrated Maria Edgeworth.

his boyish passion, the "dear talisman," as he called it, a miniature of Miss Sneyd painted by himself in 1769. In a letter to a friend, soon after his capture, he writes: "I have been taken prisoner by the Americans, and stripped of everything except the picture of Honora, which I concealed in my mouth. Preserving that, I yet think myself fortunate."

His temper, however, appears to have been naturally light and festive; and if he still cherished this "tender remembrance," it was but as one of those documents of early poetry and romance, which serve to keep the heart warm and tender among the gay and cold realities of life. What served to favor the idea was a little song which he had composed when in Philadelphia, commencing with the lines,—

> "Return, enraptured hours,
> When Delia's heart was mine",

and which was supposed to breathe the remembrance of his early and ill-requited passion.*

His varied and graceful talents, and his engaging manners, rendered him generally popular; while his devoted and somewhat subservient loyalty recommended him to the

* Composed at the request of Miss Rebecca Redman.

favor of his commander, and obtained him, without any distinguished military services, the appointment of adjutant-general with the rank of major. He was a prime promoter of elegant amusement in camp and garrison; manager, actor, and scene painter in those amateur theatricals in which the British officers delighted. He was one of the principal devisers of the Mischianza in Philadelphia, in which semi-effeminate pageant he had figured as one of the knights champions of beauty; Miss Shippen, afterwards Mrs. Arnold, being the lady whose peerless charms he undertook to vindicate. He held, moreover, a facile, and at times, satirical pen, and occasionally amused himself with caricaturing in rhyme the appearance and exploits of the "rebel officers."

André had already employed that pen in a furtive manner, after the evacuation of Philadelphia by the British; having carried on a correspondence with the leaders of a body of loyalists near the waters of the Chesapeake, who were conspiring to restore the royal government.* In the present instance he had engaged, nothing loth, in a service of intrigue and manœuvre, which, however sanctioned by military usage, should hardly have invited the zeal of a high-minded man. We say

* Simcoe's *Military Journal*, pp. 153–54.

manœuvre, because he appears to have availed himself of his former intimacy with Mrs. Arnold, to make her an unconscious means of facilitating a correspondence with her husband. Some have inculpated her in the guilt of the transaction, but, we think, unjustly. It has been alleged that a correspondence had been going on between her and André previous to her marriage, and was kept up after it; but as far as we can learn, only one letter passed between them, written by André on August 16th, 1779, in which he solicits her remembrance, assures her that respect for her and the fair circle in which he had become acquainted with her, remains unimpaired by distance or political broils, reminds her that the Mischianza had made him a complete milliner, and offers his services to furnish her with supplies in that department. "I shall be glad," adds he sportively, "to enter into the whole detail of cap-wire, needles, gauze, etc., and to the best of my abilities render you, in these trifles, services from which I hope you would infer a zeal to be further employed." The apparent object of this letter was to open a convenient medium of communication, which Arnold might use without exciting her suspicion.

Various circumstances connected with this nefarious negotiation, argue lightness of mind

and something of debasing alloy on the part of André. The correspondence carried on for months in the jargon of traffic, savored less of the camp than the counting-house; the protracted tampering with a brave but necessitous man for the sacrifice of his fame and the betrayal of his trust, strikes us as being beneath the range of a truly chivalrous nature.

Correspondence had now done its part in the business; for the completion of the plan and the adjustment of the traitor's recompense, a personal meeting was necessary between Arnold and André. The former proposed that it should take place at his own quarters at the Robinson House, where André should come in disguise, as a bearer of intelligence, and under the feigned name of John Anderson. André positively objected to entering the American lines: it was arranged, therefore, that the meeting should take place on neutral ground, near the American outposts, at Dobbs Ferry, on the 11th of September, at twelve o'clock. André attended at the appointed place and time, accompanied by Colonel Beverley Robinson, who was acquainted with the plot. An application of the latter for the restoration of his confiscated property in the Highlands, seemed to have been used occasionally as a blind in these proceedings.

The Robinson House.

Arnold's Headquarters at the time he was in Command of the Post of West Point.

Redrawn from an old print.

Arnold had passed the preceding night at what was called the White House, the residence of Mr. Joshua Hett Smith, situated on the west side of the Hudson, in Haverstraw Bay, about two miles below Stony Point. He set off thence in his barge for the place of rendezvous; but, not being protected by a flag, was fired upon and pursued by the British guard-boats stationed near Dobbs Ferry. He took refuge at an American post on the western shore, whence he returned in the night to his quarters in the Robinson House. Lest his expedition should occasion some surmise, he pretended, in a note to Washington, that he had been down the Hudson to arrange signals in case of any movement of the enemy upon the river.

New arrangements were made for an interview, but it was postponed until after Washington should depart for Hartford, to hold the proposed conference with Count Rochambeau and the other French officers. In the meantime, the British sloop of war, *Vulture*, anchored a few miles below Teller's Point, to be at hand in aid of the negotiation. On board was Colonel Robinson, who, pretending to believe that General Putnam still commanded in the Highlands, addressed a note to him requesting an interview on the subject of his

confiscated property. This letter he sent by a flag, inclosed in one addressed to Arnold; soliciting of him the same boon should General Putnam be absent.

On the 18th September, Washington with his suite crossed the Hudson to Verplanck's Point, in Arnold's barge, on his way to Hartford. Arnold accompanied him as far as Peekskill, and on the way laid before him, with affected frankness, the letter of Colonel Robinson, and asked his advice. Washington disapproved of any such interview, observing, that the civil authorities alone had cognizance of these questions of confiscated property.

Arnold now openly sent a flag on board of the *Vulture*, as if bearing a reply to the letter he had communicated to the commander-in-chief. By this occasion he informed Colonel Robinson, that a person with a boat and flag would be alongside the *Vulture*, on the night of the 20th; and that any matter he might wish to communicate, would be laid before General Washington on the following Saturday, when he might be expected back from Newport.

On the faith of the information thus covertly conveyed, André proceeded up the Hudson on the 20th, and went on board the *Vulture*, where he found Colonel Robinson, and expected

to meet Arnold. The latter, however, had made other arrangements, probably with a view to his personal security. About half-past eleven, of a still and starlight night (the 21st) a boat was descried from on board, gliding silently along, rowed by two men with muffled oars. She was hailed by an officer on watch, and called to account. A man, seated in the stern, gave out that they were from King's Ferry, bound to Dobbs Ferry. He was ordered alongside, and soon made his way on board. He proved to be Mr. Joshua Hett Smith, already mentioned, whom Arnold had prevailed upon to go on board of the *Vulture* and bring a person on shore who was coming from New York with important intelligence. He had given him passes to protect him and those with him, in case he should be stopped either in going or returning, by the American water guard, which patrolled the river in whale-boats. He had made him the bearer of a letter addressed to Colonel Beverley Robinson, which was to the following purport: "This will be delivered to you by Mr. Smith, who will conduct you to a place of safety. Neither Mr. Smith nor any other person shall be made acquainted with your proposals: if they (which I doubt not) are of such a nature that I can officially take notice of them, I shall do it with

pleasure. I take it for granted General Robinson will not propose anything that is not for the interest of the United States as well as of himself." All this use of Colonel Robinson's name was intended as a blind, should the letter be intercepted.

Robinson introduced André to Smith by the name of John Anderson, who was to go on shore in his place (he being unwell), to have an interview with General Arnold. André wore a blue great-coat which covered his uniform, and Smith always declared that at the time he was totally ignorant of his name and military character. Robinson considered this whole nocturnal proceeding full of peril, and would have dissuaded André, but the latter was zealous in executing his mission, and, embarking in the boat with Smith, was silently rowed to the western side of the river, about six miles below Stony Point. Here they landed a little after midnight, at the foot of a shadowy mountain called the Long Clove; a solitary place, the haunt of the owl and the whippoorwill, and well fitted for a treasonable conference.

Arnold was in waiting, but standing aloof among thickets. He had come hither on horseback from Smith's house, about three or four miles distant, attended by one of Smith's

servants, likewise mounted. The midnight negotiation between André and Arnold was carried on in darkness among the trees. Smith remained in the boat, and the servant drew off to a distance with the horses. One hour after another passed away, when Smith approached the place of conference, and gave warning that it was near daybreak, and if they lingered much longer the boat would be discovered.

The nefarious bargain was not yet completed, and Arnold feared the sight of a boat going to the *Vulture* might cause suspicion. He prevailed, therefore, upon André to remain on shore until the following night. The boat was accordingly sent to a creek higher up the river, and André, mounting the servant's horse, set off with Arnold, for Smith's house. The road passed through the village of Haverstraw. As they rode along in the dark, the voice of a sentinel demanding the countersign startled André with the fearful conviction that he was within the American lines, but it was too late to recede. It was daybreak when they arrived at Smith's house.

They had scarcely entered when the booming of cannon was heard from down the river. It gave André uneasiness, and with reason. Colonel Livingston, who commanded above at Verplanck's Point, learning the *Vulture* lay

within shot of Teller's Point, which divides Haverstraw Bay from the Tappan Sea, had sent a party with cannon to that point in the night, and they were now firing upon the sloop of war. André watched the cannonade with an anxious eye from an upper window of Smith's house. At one time he thought the *Vulture* was on fire. He was relieved from painful solicitude when he saw the vessel weigh anchor, and drop down the river out of reach of cannon-shot.

After breakfast, the plot for the betrayal of West Point and its dependent posts was adjusted, and the sum agreed upon that Arnold was to receive, should it be successful. André was furnished with plans of the works, and explanatory papers, which, at Arnold's request, he placed between his stockings and his feet; promising, in case of accident, to destroy them.

All matters being thus arranged, Arnold prepared to return in his own barge to his headquarters at the Robinson House. As the *Vulture* had shifted her ground, he suggested to André a return to New York by land, as most safe and expeditious; the latter, however, insisted upon being put on board of the sloop of war, on the ensuing night. Arnold consented; but, before his departure, to provide against the possible necessity of a return by

land, he gave André the following pass, dated from the Robinson House:

"Permit Mr. John Anderson to pass the guards to the White Plains, or below, if he chooses; he being on public business by my direction.

"B. Arnold, M. Genl."

Smith also, who was to accompany him, was furnished with passports to proceed either by water or by land.

Arnold departed about ten o'clock. André passed a lonely day, casting many a wistful look toward the *Vulture*. Once on board of that ship he would be safe; he would have fulfilled his mission; the capture of West Point would be certain, and his triumph would be complete. As the evening approached he grew impatient, and spoke to Smith about departure. To his surprise, he found the latter had made no preparation for it; he had discharged his boatmen, who had gone home: in short, he refused to take him on board of the *Vulture*. The cannonade of the morning had probably made him fear for his personal safety, should he attempt to go on board, the *Vulture* having resumed her exposed position. He offered, however, to cross the river with André at King's Ferry, put him in the way of return-

ing to New York by land, and accompany him some distance on horseback.

André was in an agony at finding himself, notwithstanding all his stipulations, forced within the American lines; but there seemed to be no alternative, and he prepared for the hazardous journey.

He wore, as we have noted, a military coat under a long blue surtout; he was now persuaded to lay it aside, and put on a citizen's coat of Smith's; thus adding disguise to the other humiliating and hazardous circumstances of the case.

It was about sunset when André and Smith, attended by a negro servant of the latter, crossed from King's Ferry to Verplanck's Point. After proceeding about eight miles on the road toward White Plains, they were stopped between eight and nine o'clock, near Crompond, by a patrolling party. The captain of it was uncommonly inquisitive and suspicious. The passports with Arnold's signature satisfied him. He warned them, however, against the danger of proceeding further in the night. Cow Boys from the British lines were scouring the country, and had recently marauded the neighborhood. Smith's fears were again excited and André was obliged to yield to them. A bed was furnished them in a neighboring

house, where André passed an anxious and restless night, under the very eye, as it were, of an American patrol.

At daybreak he awoke Smith, and hurried their departure; and his mind was lightened of a load of care, when he found himself out of the reach of the patrol and its inquisitive commander.

They were now approaching that noted part of the country heretofore mentioned as the Neutral Ground, extending north and south about thirty miles, between the British and American lines. A beautiful region of forest-clad hills, fertile valleys, and abundant streams, but now almost desolated by the scourings of Skinners and Cow Boys; the former professing allegiance to the American cause, the latter to the British, but both arrant marauders.

One who had resided at the time in this region, gives a sad picture of its state. Houses plundered and dismantled; inclosures broken down; cattle carried away; fields lying waste; the roads grass-grown; the country mournful, solitary, silent—reminding one of the desolation presented in the song of Deborah. "In the days of Shamgar the son of Anath, in the days of Jael, the highways were unoccupied, and the travellers walked in bypaths. The in-

habitants of the villages ceased; they ceased in Israel."*

About two and a half miles from Pine's Bridge, on the Croton River, André and his companion partook of a scanty meal at a farm-house which had recently been harried by the Cow Boys. Here they parted, Smith to return home, André to pursue his journey alone to New York. His spirits, however, were cheerful; for, having got beyond the patrols, he considered the most perilous part of his route accomplished.

About six miles beyond Pine's Bridge he came to a place where the road forked, the left branch leading toward White Plains in the interior of the country, the right inclining toward the Hudson. He had originally intended to take the left-hand road, the other being said to be infested by Cow Boys. These, however, were not to be apprehended by him, as they belonged to the lower party or British; it led, too, more directly to New York; so he turned down it, and took his course along the river road.

He had not proceeded far, when coming to a place where a small stream crossed the road and ran into a woody dell, a man stepped out from the trees, levelled a musket, and brought

* See Dwight's *Travels*, vol. iii.

him to a stand, while two other men similarly armed, showed themselves prepared to second their comrade.

The man who had first stepped out wore a refugee uniform. At sight of it, André's heart leapt, and he felt himself secure. Losing all caution, he exclaimed eagerly: "Gentlemen, I hope you belong to our party?"—"What party?" was asked.—"The lower party," said André.—"We do," was the reply. All reserve was now at an end. André declared himself to be a British officer; that he had been up the country on particular business, and must not be detained a single moment. He drew out his watch as he spoke. It was a gold one, and served to prove to them that he was what he represented himself, gold watches being seldom worn in those days, excepting by persons of consequence.

To his consternation, the supposed refugee now avowed himself and his companions to be Americans, and told André he was their prisoner!

It was even so. The sacking and burning of Young's House, and the carrying of its rustic defenders into captivity, had roused the spirit of the Neutral Ground. The yeomanry of that harassed country had turned out in parties to intercept freebooters from the British

lines, who had recently been on the maraud, and might be returning to the city with their spoils. One of these parties, composed of seven men of the neighborhood, had divided itself. Four took post on a hill above Sleepy Hollow, to watch the road which crossed the country; the other three, John Paulding, Isaac Van Wart, and David Williams by name, stationed themselves on the road which runs parallel to the Hudson. Two of them were seated on the grass playing at cards to pass away the time, while one mounted guard.

The one in refugee garb who brought André to a stand, was John Paulding, a stout-hearted youngster, who, like most of the young men of this outraged neighborhood, had been repeatedly in arms to repel or resent aggressions, and now belonged to the militia. He had twice been captured and confined in the loathsome military prisons, where patriots suffered in New York, first in the North Dutch Church, and last in the noted Sugar House. Both times he had made his escape; the last time, only four days previous to the event of which we are treating. The ragged refugee coat, which had deceived André and been the cause of his betraying himself, had been given to Paulding by one of his captors, in exchange for a good yeoman garment of which they

John Paulding.

From an original miniature.

Thew.

stripped him.* This slight circumstance may have produced the whole discovery of the treason.

André was astounded at finding into what hands he had fallen; and how he had betrayed himself by his heedless avowal. Promptly, however, recovering his self-possession, he endeavored to pass off his previous account of himself as a subterfuge. "A man must do anything," said he, laughingly, "to get along." He now declared himself to be a continental officer, going down to Dobbs Ferry to get information from below; so saying, he drew forth and showed them the pass of General Arnold.

This, in the first instance, would have been sufficient, but his unwary tongue had ruined him. The suspicions of his captors were completely aroused. Seizing the bridle of his horse, they ordered him to dismount. He warned them that he was on urgent business for the general, and that they would get themselves into trouble should they detain him. "We care not for that," was the reply, as they led him among the thickets, on the border of the brook.

* Stated on the authority of Commodore Hiram Paulding, a son of the captor, who heard it repeatedly from the lips of his father.

Paulding asked whether he had any letters about him. He answered no. They proceeded to search him. A minute description is given of his dress. He wore a round hat, a blue surtout, a crimson close-bodied coat, somewhat faded; the button-holes worked with gold, and the buttons covered with gold lace, a nankeen vest, and small-clothes and boots.

They obliged him to take off his coat and vest, and found on him eighty dollars in continental money, but nothing to warrant suspicion of anything sinister; and were disposed to let him proceed, when Paulding exclaimed: "Boys, I'm not satisfied—his boots must come off."

At this André changed color. His boots he said, came off with difficulty, and he begged he might not be subjected to the inconvenience and delay. His remonstrances were in vain. He was obliged to sit down: his boots were drawn off, and the concealed papers discovered. Hastily scanning them, Paulding exclaimed: "My God! He is a spy!"

He demanded of André where he had gotten these papers.

"Of a man at Pine's Bridge, a stranger to me," was the reply.

While dressing himself, André endeavored to ransom himself from his captors; rising

from one offer to another. He would give any sum of money if they would let him go. He would give his horse, saddle, bridle, and one hundred guineas, and would send them to any place they might be fixed upon.

Williams asked him if he would not give more.

He replied, that he would give any reward they might name either in goods or money, and would remain with two of their party while one went to New York to get it.

Here Paulding broke in and declared with an oath, that if he would give ten thousand guineas, he should not stir one step.*

The unfortunate André now submitted to his fate, and the captors set off with their prisoner for North Castle, the nearest American post, distant ten or twelve miles. They proceeded across a hilly and woody region, part of the way by the road, part across fields. One strode in front, occasionally holding the horse by the bridle, the others walked on either side. André rode on in silence, declining to answer further questions until he should come before a military officer. About noon they halted at a farm-house where the inhabitants were taking their mid-day repast. The worthy housewife, moved by André's prepossessing appearance

*Testimony of David Williams.

and dejected air, kindly invited him to partake. He declined, alleging that he had no appetite. Glancing at his gold-laced crimson coat, the good dame apologized for her rustic fare. "O madam," exclaimed poor André with a melancholy shake of the head, "it is all very good—but, indeed, I cannot eat!"

This was related to us by a venerable matron, who was present on the occasion, a young girl at the time, but who in her old days could not recall the scene and the appearance of André without tears.

The captors with their prisoner being arrived at North Castle, Lieutenant-Colonel Jameson, who was in command there, recognized the handwriting of Arnold in the papers found upon André, and, perceiving that they were of a dangerous nature, sent them off by express to General Washington, at Hartford.

André still adhering to his assumed name, begged that the commander at West Point might be informed that John Anderson, though bearing his passport, was detained.

Jameson appears completely to have lost his head on the occasion. He wrote to Arnold, stating the circumstances of the arrest, and that the papers found upon the prisoner had been despatched by express to the commander-in-chief, and at the same time, he sent the

prisoner himself, under a strong guard, to accompany the letter.*

Shortly afterwards, Major Tallmadge, next in command to Jameson, but of a much clearer head, arrived at North Castle, having been absent on duty to White Plains. When the circumstances of the case were related to him, he at once suspected treachery on the part of Arnold. At his earnest entreaties, an express was sent after the officer who had André in charge, ordering him to bring the latter back to North Castle; but by singular perversity or obtuseness in judgment, Jameson neglected to countermand the letter which he had written to Arnold.

When André was brought back, and was pacing up and down the room, Tallmadge saw at once by his air and movements, and the mode of turning on his heel, that he was a military man. By his advice, and under his escort, the prisoner was conducted to Colonel Sheldon's post at Lower Salem, as more secure than North Castle.

Here André, being told that the papers found upon his person had been forwarded to Washington, addressed to him immediately the following lines:

*Sparks's *Arnold*. We would note generally, that we are indebted to Mr. Sparks's work for many particulars given by us of this tale of treason.

"I beg your Excellency will be persuaded that no alteration in the temper of my mind or apprehensions for my safety, induces me to take the step of addressing you; but that it is to secure myself from the imputation of having assumed a mean character for treacherous purposes or self-interest. . . . It is to vindicate my fame that I speak, and not to solicit security.

"The person in your possession is Major John André, adjutant-general of the British army.

"The influence of one commander in the army of his adversary is an advantage taken in war. A correspondence for this purpose I held; as confidential (in the present instance) with his Excellency, Sir Henry Clinton. To favor it, I agreed to meet upon ground not within the posts of either army, a person who was to give me intelligence. I came up in the *Vulture* man-of-war for this effect, and was fetched from the shore to the beach. Being there, I was told that the approach of day would prevent my return, and that I must be concealed until the next night. I was in my regimentals, and had fairly risked my person.

"Against my stipulation, my intention, and without my knowledge beforehand, I was conducted within one of your posts. Thus was I

betrayed into the vile condition of an enemy within your posts.

"Having avowed myself a British officer, I have nothing to reveal but what relates to myself, which is true, on the honor of an officer and a gentleman.

"The request I have made to your Excellency, and I am conscious that I address myself well, is, that in any rigor policy may dictate, a decency of conduct towards me may mark, that, though unfortunate, I am branded with nothing dishonorable; as no motive could be mine but the service of my king, and as I was involuntarily an impostor."

This letter he submitted to the perusal of Major Tallmadge, who was surprised and agitated at finding the rank and importance of the prisoner he had in charge. The letter being despatched, and André's pride relieved on a sensitive point, he resumed his serenity, apparently unconscious of the awful responsibility of his situation. Having a talent for caricature, he even amused himself in the course of the day by making a ludicrous sketch of himself and his rustic escort under march, and presenting it to an officer in the room with him. "This," said he gayly, "will give you an idea of the style in which I have had the honor to be conducted to my present abode."

NOTE.

André's propensity for caricature had recently been indulged in a mock heroic poem in three cantos, celebrating an attack upon a British picket by Wayne, with the driving into the American camp of a drove of cattle by Lee's dragoons. It is written with great humor, and is full of grotesque imagery. "Mad Anthony" especially is in broad caricature, and represented to have lost his horse upon the great occasion.

"His horse that carried all his prog,
His military speeches,
His cornstalk whiskey for his grog—
Blue stockings and brown breeches."

The cantos were published at different times in Rivington's *Gazette*. It so happened that the last canto appeared on the very day of André's capture and ended with the following stanza, which might be considered ominous:

"And now I 've closed my epic strain,
I tremble as I show it,
Lest this same warrio-drover, Wayne,
Should ever catch the poet."

Chapter VII.

Interview of Washington with the French Officers at Hartford—Plan of Attack Disconcerted—Washington's Return—Scenes at Arnold's Headquarters in the Highlands—Tidings of André's Capture—Flight of Arnold—Letters from the Traitor—Washington's Precautions—Situation of Mrs. Arnold.

ON the very day that the treasonable conference between Arnold and André took place, on the banks of Haverstraw Bay, Washington had his interview with the French officers at Hartford. It led to no important result. Intelligence was received that the squadron of the Count de Guichen, on which they had relied to give them superiority by sea, had sailed for Europe. This disconcerted their plans, and Washington, in consequence, set out two or three days sooner than had been anticipated on his return to his headquarters on the Hudson. He was accompanied by Lafayette and General Knox with their suites; also, part of the way, by

Count Matthew Dumas, aide-de-camp to Rocambeau. The count, who regarded Washington with an enthusiasm which appears to have been felt by many of the young French officers, gives an animated picture of the manner in which he was greeted in one of the towns through which they passed. "We arrived there," says he, "at night; the whole population had sallied forth beyond the suburbs. We were surrounded by a crowd of children carrying torches, and reiterating the acclamations of the citizens; all were eager to touch the person of him whom they hailed with loud cries as their father, and they thronged before us so as almost to prevent our moving onward. General Washington, much affected, paused a few moments, and pressing my hand, 'We may be beaten by the English,' said he, 'it is the chance of war; but there is the army they will never conquer!'"

These few words speak that noble confidence in the enduring patriotism of his countrymen, which sustained him throughout all the fluctuating fortunes of the Revolution; yet at this very moment it was about to receive one of the cruelest wounds.

On approaching the Hudson, Washington took a more circuitous route than the one he had originally intended, striking the river at

Fishkill just above the Highlands, that he might visit West Point, and show the marquis the works which had been erected there during his absence in France. Circumstances detained them a night at Fishkill. Their baggage was sent on to Arnold's quarters in the Robinson House, with a message apprising the general that they would breakfast there the next day. In the morning (September 24th) they were in the saddle before break of day, having a ride to make of eighteen miles through the mountains. It was a pleasant and animated one. Washington was in excellent spirits, and the buoyant marquis, and genial, warm-hearted Knox were companions with whom he was always disposed to unbend.

When within a mile of the Robinson House, Washington turned down a cross road leading to the banks of the Hudson. Lafayette apprised him that he was going out of the way, and hinted that Mrs. Arnold must be waiting breakfast for him. "Ah, marquis!" replied he good-humoredly, "you young men are all in love with Mrs. Arnold. I see you are eager to be with her as soon as possible. Go you and breakfast with her, and tell her not to wait for me. I must ride down and examine the redoubts on this side of the river, but will be with her shortly."

The marquis and General Knox, however, turned off and accompanied him down to the redoubts, while Colonel Hamilton and Lafayette's aide-de-camp, Major James McHenry, continued along the main road to the Robinson House, bearing Washington's apology, and request that the breakfast might not be retarded.

The family with the two aides-de-camp sat down to breakfast. Mrs. Arnold had arrived but four or five days previously from Philadelphia, with her infant child, then about six months old. She was bright and amiable as usual. Arnold was silent and gloomy. It was an anxious moment with him. This was the day appointed for the consummation of the plot, when the enemy's ships were to ascend the river. The return of the commander-in-chief from the East two days sooner than had been anticipated, and his proposed visit to the forts, threatened to disconcert everything. What might be the consequence Arnold could not conjecture. An interval of fearful imaginings was soon brought to a direful close. In the midst of the repast a horseman alighted at the gate. It was the messenger bearing Jameson's letter to Arnold, stating the capture of André, and that dangerous papers found on him had been forwarded to Washington.

The mine had exploded beneath Arnold's

feet; yet in this awful moment he gave an evidence of that quickness of mind which had won laurels for him when in the path of duty. Controlling the dismay that must have smitten him to the heart, he beckoned Mrs. Arnold from the breakfast-table signifying a wish to speak with her in private. When alone with her in her room upstairs, he announced in hurried words that he was a ruined man, and must instantly fly for his life! Overcome by the shock, she fell senseless on the floor. Without pausing to aid her, he hurried down stairs, sent the messenger to her assistance, probably to keep him from an interview with the other officers; returned to the breakfast-room, and informed his guests that he must haste to West Point to prepare for the reception of the commander-in-chief: and mounting the horse of the messenger, which stood saddled at the door, galloped down by what is still called Arnold's Path, to the landing-place, where his six-oared barge was moored. Throwing himself into it, he ordered his men to pull out into the middle of the river, and then made down with all speed for Teller's Point, which divides Haverstraw Bay from the Tappan Sea, saying he must be back soon to meet the commander-in-chief.

Washington arrived at the Robinson House

shortly after the flight of the traitor. Being informed that Mrs. Arnold was in her room, unwell, and that Arnold had gone to West Point to receive him, he took a hasty breakfast and repaired to the fortress, leaving word that he and his suite would return to dinner.

In crossing the river, he noticed that no salute was fired from the fort, nor was there any preparation to receive him on his landing. Colonel Lamb, the officer in command, who came down to the shore, manifested surprise at seeing him, and apologized for this want of military ceremony, by assuring him he had not been apprised of his intended visit.

"Is not General Arnold here?" demanded Washington.

"No, sir. He has not been here for two days past; nor have I heard from him in that time."

This was strange and perplexing, but no sinister suspicion entered Washington's mind. He remained at the Point throughout the morning, inspecting the fortifications. In the meantime, the messenger whom Jameson had despatched to Hartford with a letter covering the papers taken on André, arrived at the Robinson House. He had learnt, while on the way to Hartford, that Washington had left that place, whereupon he turned bridle to over-

take him, but missed him in consequence of the general's change of route. Coming by the lower road, the messenger had passed through Salem, where André was confined, and brought with him the letter written by that unfortunate officer to the commander-in-chief, the purport of which has already been given. These letters being represented as of the utmost moment, were opened and read by Colonel Hamilton, as Washington's aide-de-camp and confidential officer. He maintained silence as to their contents; met Washington, as he and his companions were coming up from the river, on their return from West Point, spoke to him a few words in a low voice, and they retired together into the house. Whatever agitation Washington may have felt when these documents of deep-laid treachery were put before him, he wore his usual air of equanimity when he rejoined his companions. Taking Knox and Lafayette aside, he communicated to them the intelligence, and placed the papers in their hands. "Whom can we trust now?" was his only comment, but it spoke volumes.

His first idea was to arrest the traitor. Conjecturing the direction of his flight, he despatched Colonel Hamilton on horseback to spur with all speed to Verplanck's Point, which commands the narrow part of the Hudson, just

below the Highlands, with orders to the commander to intercept Arnold should he not already have passed that post. This done, when dinner was announced, he invited the company to table. "Come, gentlemen, since Mrs. Arnold is unwell, and the general is absent, let us sit down without ceremony." The repast was a quiet one, for none but Lafayette and Knox, beside the general, knew the purport of the letters just received.

In the meantime, Arnold, panic-stricken, had sped his caitiff flight through the Highlands; infamy howling in his ear, arrest threatening him in advance; a fugitive past the posts which he had recently commanded; shrinking at the sight of that flag which hitherto it had been his glory to defend! Alas! how changed from the Arnold, who, but two years previously, when repulsed, wounded and crippled, before the walls of Quebec, could yet write proudly from a shattered camp, "I am in the way of my duty, and I know no fear!"

He had passed through the Highlands in safety, but there were the batteries at Verplanck's Point yet to fear. Fortunately for him, Hamilton, with the order for his arrest, had not arrived there.

His barge was known by the garrison. A white handkerchief displayed gave it the sanc-

tion of a flag of truce: it was suffered to pass without question, and the traitor effected his escape to the *Vulture* sloop-of-war, anchored a few miles below. As if to consummate his degradation by a despicable act of treachery and meanness, he gave up to the commander his coxswain and six bargemen as prisoners of war. We are happy to add, that this perfidy excited the scorn of the British officers; and, when it was found that the men had supposed they were acting under the protection of a flag, they were released by order of Sir Henry Clinton.

Colonel Hamilton returned to the Robinson House and reported the escape of the traitor. He brought two letters also to Washington, which had been sent on shore from the *Vulture*, under a flag of truce. One was from Arnold, of which the following is a transcript:

"Sir,—The heart which is conscious of its own rectitude, cannot attempt to palliate a step which the world may censure as wrong; I have ever acted from a principle of love to my country, since the commencement of the present unhappy contest between Great Britain and the colonies; the same principle of love to my country actuates my present conduct, however it may appear inconsistent to the world, who seldom judge right of any man's actions.

"I ask no favor for myself. I have too often experienced the ingratitude of my country to attempt it; but, from the known humanity of your Excellency, I am induced to ask your protection for Mrs. Arnold from every insult and injury that a mistaken vengeance of my country may expose her to. It ought to fall only on me; she is as good and innocent as an angel, and is incapable of doing wrong. I beg she may be permitted to return to her friends in Philadelphia, or to come to me as she may choose; from your Excellency I have no fears on her account, but she may suffer from the mistaken fury of the country."

The other letter was from Colonel Beverley Robinson, interceding for the release of André, on the plea that he was on shore under the sanction of a flag of truce, at the request of Arnold. Robinson had hoped to find favor with Washington on the score of their early intimacy.

Notwithstanding Washington's apparent tranquillity and real self-possession, it was a time of appalling distrust. How far the treason had extended, who else might be implicated in it, was unknown. Arnold had escaped, and was actually on board of the *Vulture;* he knew everything about the condition of the posts: might he not persuade the enemy, in the present weak state of the garrisons, to

attempt a *coup de main?* Washington, instantly, therefore, despatched a letter to Colonel Wade, who was in temporary command at West Point. "General Arnold is gone to the enemy," writes he. "I have just now received a line from him inclosing one to Mrs. Arnold, dated on board the *Vulture*. I request that you will be as vigilant as possible, and as the enemy may have it in contemplation to attempt some enterprise, *even to-night*, against these posts, I wish you to make, immediately after the receipt of this, the best disposition you can of your force, so as to have a proportion of men in each work on the west side of the river."

A regiment stationed in the Highlands was ordered to the same duty, as well as a body of the Massachusetts militia from Fishkill. At half-past seven in the evening, Washington wrote to General Greene, who, in his absence, commanded the army at Tappan; urging him to put the left division in motion as soon as possible, with orders to proceed to King's Ferry, where, or before they should arrive there, they would be met with further orders. "The division," writes he, "will come on light, leaving their heavy baggage to follow. You will also hold all the troops in readiness to move on the shortest notice. Transactions of

a most interesting nature, and such as will astonish you, have been just discovered."

His next thought was about André. He was not acquainted with him personally, and the intrigues in which he had been engaged, and the errand on which he had come, made him consider him an artful and resolute person. He had possessed himself of dangerous information, and in a manner had been arrested with the key of the citadel in his pocket. On the same evening, therefore, Washington wrote to Colonel Jameson, charging that every precaution should be taken to prevent Major André from making his escape. "He will no doubt effect it, if possible; and in order that he may not have it in his power, you will send him under the care of such a party and so many officers as to preclude him from the least opportunity of doing it. That he may be less liable to be recaptured by the enemy, who will no doubt make every effort to regain him, he had better be conducted to this place by some upper road, rather than by the route of Crompond. I would not wish Mr. André to be treated with insult; but he does not appear to stand upon the footing of a common prisoner of war, and, therefore, he is not entitled to the usual indulgences which they receive, and is to be most closely and narrowly watched."

In the meantime, Mrs. Arnold remained in her room in a state bordering on frenzy. Arnold might well confide in the humanity and delicacy of Washington in respect to her. He regarded her with the sincerest commiseration, acquitting her of all previous knowledge of her husband's guilt. On remitting to her, by one of his aides-de-camp, the letter of her husband, written from on board of the *Vulture*, he informed her that he had done all that depended upon himself to have him arrested, but not having succeeded, he experienced a pleasure in assuring her of his safety.*

A letter of Hamilton's written at the time, with all the sympathies of a young man, gives a touching picture of Washington's first interview with her. "She for a time entirely lost herself. The general went up to see her, and she upraided him with being in a plot to murder her child. One moment she raved, another she melted into tears, sometimes she pressed her infant to her bosom, and lamented its fate occasioned by the imprudence of its father, in a manner that would have pierced insensibility itself. All the sweetness of beauty, all the loveliness of innocence, all the tenderness of a wife, and all the fondness of a mother showed themselves in her appearance and conduct."

* *Memoirs of Lafayette*, vol. i., p. 264.

During the brief time she remained at the Robinson House, she was treated with the utmost deference and delicacy, but soon set off, under a passport of Washington, for her father's house in Philadelphia.

Chapter IV.

André's Conduct as a Prisoner—His Conversations with Colonel Tallmadge—Story of Nathan Hale—André's Prison at Tappan—Correspondence on his Behalf—His Trial—Execution—Reward of the Captors—Reward of Arnold—His Proclamation—After Fortunes of Mrs. Arnold.

ON the 26th of September, the day after the treason of Arnold had been revealed to Washington, André arrived at the Robinson House, having been brought on in the night, under escort and in charge of Major Tallmadge. Washington made many inquiries of the major, but declined to have the prisoner brought into his presence, apparently entertaining a strong idea of his moral obliquity, from the nature of the scheme in which he had been engaged, and the circumstances under which he had been arrested.

The same evening he transmitted him to

West Point, and shortly afterwards, Joshua H. Smith, who had likewise been arrested. Still, not considering them secure even there, he determined on the following day to send them on to the camp. In a letter to Greene he writes: "They will be under an escort of horse, and I wish you to have separate houses in camp ready for their reception, in which they may be kept perfectly secure; and also strong, trusty guards, trebly officered, that a part may be constantly in the room with them. They have not been permitted to be together, and must be kept apart. I would wish the room for Mr. André to be a decent one, and that he may be treated with civility; but that he may be so guarded as to preclude a possibility of his escaping, which he will certainly attempt to effect, if it shall seem practicable in the most distant degree."

Major Tallmadge continued to have charge of André. Not regarding him from the same anxious point with the commander-in-chief, and having had opportunities of acquiring a personal knowledge of him, he had become fascinated by his engaging qualities. "The ease and affability of his manners," writes he, "polished by the refinement of good society and a finished education, made him a most delightful companion. It often drew tears from

my eyes, to find him so agreeable in conversation on different subjects, when I reflected on his future fate, and that too, as I feared, so near at hand."

Early on the morning of the 28th, the prisoners were embarked in a barge, to be conveyed from West Point to King's Ferry. Tallmadge placed André by his side on the after seat of the barge. Both being young, of equal rank, and prepossessing manners, a frank and cordial intercourse had grown up between them. By a cartel, mutually agreed upon, each might put to the other any question not involving a third person. They were passing below the rocky heights of West Point, and in full view of the fortress, when Tallmadge asked André whether he would have taken an active part in the attack on it, should Arnold's plan have succeeded. André promptly answered in the affirmative; pointed out a table of land on the west shore, where he would have landed at the head of a select corps, described the route he would have taken up the mountain to a height in the rear of Fort Putnam, overlooking the whole parade of West Point—"and this he did," writes Tallmadge, "with much greater exactness than I could have done. This eminence he would have reached without difficulty, as Arnold would have dis-

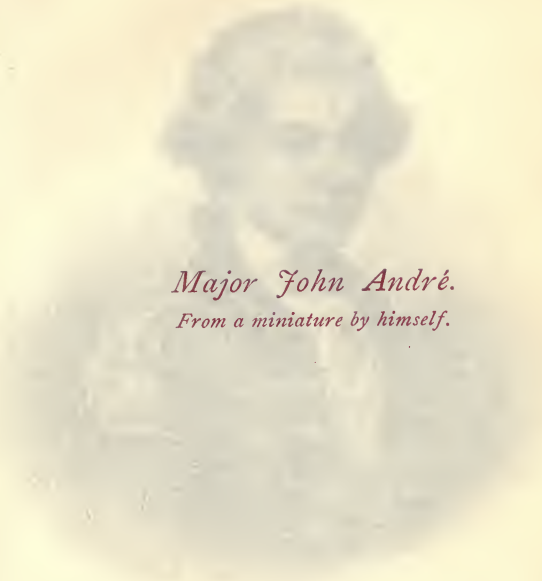
posed of the garrison in such manner as to be capable of little or no opposition—*and then the key of the country would have been in his hands, and he would have had the glory of the splendid achievement.*"

Tallmadge fairly kindled into admiration as André, with hereditary French vivacity, acted the scene he was describing. "It seemed to him," he said, "as if André were entering the fort sword in hand."

He ventured to ask what was to have been his reward had he succeeded. "Military glory was all he sought. The thanks of his general and the approbation of his king would have been a rich reward for such an undertaking."

Tallmadge was perfectly charmed, but adds quietly, "I think he further remarked, that, if he had succeeded, *he was to have been promoted to the rank of a brigadier-general.*"

While thus the prisoner, confident of the merit of what he had attempted, kindled with the idea of an imaginary triumph, and the youthful officer who had him in charge caught fire from his enthusiasm, the barge glided through that solemn defile of mountains, through which, but a few days previously, Arnold, the panic-stricken traitor of the drama, had fled like a felon.



Major John André.

From a miniature by himself.

H.B. Hall

After disembarking at King's Ferry near Stony Point, they set off for Tappan under the escort of a body of horse. As they approached the Clove, a deep defile in the rear of the Highlands, André, who rode beside Tallmadge, became solicitous to know the opinion of the latter as to what would be the result of his capture, and in what light he would be regarded by General Washington and by a military tribunal, should one be ordered. Tallmadge evaded the question as long as possible, but being urged to a full and explicit reply, gave it, he says, in the following words: "I had a much-loved classmate in Yale College, by the name of Nathan Hale, who entered the army in 1775. Immediately after the battle of Long Island, General Washington wanted information respecting the strength, position, and probable movements of the enemy. Captain Hale tendered his services, went over to Brooklyn, and was taken, just as he was passing the outposts of the enemy on his return; said I with emphasis—'Do you remember the sequel of the story?' 'Yes,' said André. 'He was hanged as a spy! But you surely do not consider his case and mine alike?' 'Yes, precisely similar; and similar will be your fate.'"*

* The fate of the heroic youth here alluded to, deserves a more ample notice. Born in Coventry, Con-

"He endeavored," adds Tallmadge, "to answer my remarks, but it was manifest he was more troubled in spirit than I had ever seen him before."

necticut, June 6, 1755, he entered Yale College in 1770, and graduated with some distinction in September, 1773, having previously contracted an engagement of marriage; not unlike André in this respect, who wooed his "Honora," at eighteen. On quitting college he engaged as a teacher, as is common with young men in New England, while studying for a profession. His half-formed purpose was to devote himself to the ministry. As a teacher of youth, he was eminently skilful, and equally appreciated by parents and pupils. He became universally popular. "Everybody loved him," said a lady of his acquaintance, "he was so sprightly, intelligent and kind, and *so* handsome."

He was teaching at New London, when an express arrived bringing tidings of the outbreak at Lexington. A town meeting was called, and Hale was among the most ardent of the speakers, proposing an instant march to the scene of hostilities, and offering to volunteer. "A sense of duty," writes he to his father, "urges me to sacrifice everything for my country."

He served in the army before Boston as lieutenant; prevailed on his company to extend their term of service by offering them his own pay, and for his good conduct received from Congress the commission of captain. He commanded a company in Colonel Knowlton's regiment in the following year. After the disastrous battle of Long Island, Washington applied to that officer for a competent person to penetrate the enemy's camp, and procure intelligence of their de-

"We stopped at the Clove to dine and let the horse-guard refresh," continues Tallmadge. "While there, André kept reviewing his shabby dress, and finally remarked to me, that

signs; a service deemed vital in that dispiriting crisis. Hale, in the ardor of patriotism, volunteered for the unenviable enterprise, though fully aware of its peril, and the consequences of capture.

Assuming his old character as schoolmaster, he crossed the Sound at night from Norwalk to Huntington on Long Island, visited the British encampments unsuspected, made drawings of the enemy's works, and noted down memoranda in Latin of the information he gathered, and then retraced his steps to Huntington, where a boat was to meet him and convey him back to the Connecticut shore. Unfortunately a British guard ship was at that time anchored out of view in the Sound, and had sent a boat on shore for water. Hale mistook it for the expected boat, and did not discover his mistake until he found himself in the hands of the enemies. He was stripped and searched, the plans and memoranda were found concealed in the soles of his shoes, and proved him to be a spy.

He was conveyed to the guard ship, and thence to New York, where he was landed on the 21st of September, the day of the great fire. He was taken to General Howe's headquarters, and, after brief parley with his judge, ordered for execution the next morning at daybreak—a sentence carried out by the provost marshal, the brutal and infamous Cunningham, who refused his request for a Bible, and destroyed a letter he had addressed to his mother, for the reason

he was positively ashamed to go to the head-quarters of the American army in such a plight. I called my servant and directed him to bring my dragoon cloak, which I presented to Major André. This he refused for some time ; but I insisted on it, and he finally put it on and rode in it to Tappan."

The place which had been prepared to receive Major André, is still pointed out as the "76 Stone House." The caution which Washington had given as to his safe keeping, was strictly observed by Colonel Scammel, the adjutant-general, as may be seen by his orders to the officer of the guards.

"Major André, the prisoner under your guard, is not only an officer of distinction in the British army, but a man of infinite art and address, who will leave no means unattempted to make his escape and avoid the ignominious death which awaits him. You are therefore, in addition to your sentries, to keep two officers constantly in the room with him, with their swords drawn, whilst the other officers who are out of the room are constantly to keep

afterwards given by himself, "that the rebels should never know they had a man who could die with such firmness." His patriot spirit shone forth in his dying words,—"I only regret that I have but one life to lose for my country."

walking the entry and around the sentries, to see that they are alert. No person whatever to be permitted to enter the room, or speak with him, unless by direction of the commander-in-chief. You are by no means to suffer him to go out of the room on any pretext whatever."*

The capture of André caused a great sensation at New York. He was universally popular with the army, and an especial favorite of Sir Henry Clinton. The latter addressed a letter to Washington on the 29th, claiming the release of André on similar ground to that urged by Colonel Robinson—his having visited Arnold at the particular request of that general officer, and under the sanction of a flag of truce; and his having been stopped while travelling under Arnold's passports. The same letter inclosed one addressed by Arnold to Sir Henry, and intended as a kind of certificate of the innocence of André. "I commanded at the time at West Point," writes the renegade, "had an undoubted right to send my flag of truce to Major André, who came to me under that protection, and, having held conversation with him, I delivered him confidential papers in my own handwriting to deliver to your Excellency. Thinking it much properer

* From a copy among the papers of General Hand.

he should return by land, I directed him to make use of the feigned name of John Anderson, under which he had, by my direction, come on shore, and gave him my passports to go to the White Plains, on his way to New York. . . . All which I had then a right to do, being in the actual service of America, under the orders of General Washington, and commanding general at West Point and its dependencies." He concludes, therefore, that André cannot fail of being immediately sent to New York.

Neither the official demand of Sir Henry Clinton, nor the impudent certificate of Arnold, had any effect on the steady mind of Washington. He considered the circumstances under which André had been taken such as would have justified the most summary proceedings, but he determined to refer the case to the examination and decision of a board of general officers, which he convened on the 29th of September, the day after his arrival at Tappan. It was composed of six major-generals, Greene, Stirling, St. Clair, Lafayette, R. Howe, and Steuben; and eight brigadiers, Parsons, James Clinton, Knox, Glover, Paterson, Hand, Huntingdon, and Stark. General Greene, who was well versed in military law, and was a man of sound head and kind heart, was president, and

Colonel John Lawrence, judge advocate-general.

Colonel Alexander Hamilton, who, like Tallmadge, had drawn to André in his misfortunes, as had most of the young American officers, gives, in letters to his friends, many interesting particulars concerning the conduct of the prisoner. "When brought before the board of officers," writes he, "he met with every mark of indulgence and was required to answer no interrogatory which would even embarrass his feelings. On his part, while he carefully concealed everything that might implicate others, he frankly confessed all the facts relating to himself, and upon his confession, without the trouble of examining a witness, the board made up their report."

It briefly stated the circumstances of the case, and concluded with the opinion of the court, that Major André, adjutant-general of the British army, ought to be considered a spy from the enemy, and, agreeably to the law and usage of nations, ought to suffer death. In a conversation with Hamilton, André acknowledged the candor, liberality, and indulgence with which the board had conducted themselves in their painful inquiry. He met the result with manly firmness. "I foresee my fate," said he; "and though I pretend not to

play the hero, or be indifferent about life, yet I am reconciled to whatever may happen ; conscious that misfortune, not guilt, has brought it upon me."

Even in this situation of gathering horrors, he thought of others more than himself. "There is only one thing that disturbs my tranquillity," said he to Hamilton. "Sir Henry Clinton has been too good to me ; he has been lavish of his kindness. I am bound to him by too many obligations, and love him too well, to bear the thought that he should reproach himself, or others should reproach him, on the supposition of my having conceived myself obliged, by his instructions, to run the risk I did. I would not for the world leave a sting in his mind that should embitter his future days." He could scarce finish the sentence ; bursting into tears, in spite of his efforts to suppress them, and with difficulty collected himself enough afterwards to add, "I wish to be permitted to assure him that I did not act under this impression, but submitted to a necessity imposed upon me, as contrary to my own inclinations as to his wishes."

His request was complied with, and he wrote a letter to Sir Henry Clinton to the above purport. He made mention also of his mother and three sisters, to whom the value of his

commission would be an object. "It is needless," said he, "to be more explicit on this subject; I am persuaded of your Excellency's goodness." *

He concluded by saying, "I receive the greatest attention from his Excellency, General Washington, and from every person under whose charge I happen to be placed."

This letter accompanied one from Washington to Sir Henry Clinton, stating the report of the board of inquiry, omitting the sentence. "From these proceedings," observes he, "it is evident that Major André was employed in the execution of measures very foreign to the objects of flags of truce, and such as they were never meant to authorize in the most distant degree; and this gentleman confessed with the greatest candor, in the course of his examination, that it was impossible for him to suppose that he came on shore under the sanction of a flag."

Captain Aaron Ogden, a worthy officer of

* The commission was sold by Sir Henry Clinton, for the benefit of André's mother and sisters. The king also settled a pension on the mother, and offered to confer the honor of knighthood on André's brother, in order to wipe away all stain from the family, that the circumstance of his fate might be thought to occasion.

the New Jersey line, was selected by Washington to bear these despatches to the enemy's post at Paulus Hook, thence to be conveyed across the Hudson to New York. Before his departure, he called by Washington's request on the Marquis Lafayette, who gave him instructions to sound the officer commanding at that post whether Sir Henry Clinton might not be willing to deliver up Arnold in exchange for André. Ogden arrived at Paulus Hook in the evening, and made the suggestion, as if incidentally, in the course of conversion. The officer demanded if he had any authority from Washington for such an intimation. "I have no such assurance from General Washington," replied he, "but I am prepared to say, that if such a proposal were made, I believe it would be accepted, and Major André set at liberty."

The officer crossed the river before morning, and communicated the matter to Sir Henry Clinton, but the latter instantly rejected the expedient as incompatible with honor and military principle.

In the meantime, the character, appearance, deportment, and fortunes, of André, had interested the feelings of the oldest and sternest soldiers around him, and completely captivated the sympathies of the younger ones. He was treated with the greatest respect and kindness

throughout his confinement, and his table was supplied from that of the commander-in-chief.

Hamilton, who was in daily intercourse with him, describes him as well improved by education and travel, with an elegant turn of mind, and a taste for the fine arts. He had attained some proficiency in poetry, music, and painting. His sentiments were elevated, his elocution was fluent, his address easy, polite, and engaging, with a softness that conciliated affection. His talents and accomplishments were accompanied, says Hamilton, by a diffidence that induced you to give him credit for more than appeared.

No one felt stronger sympathy in his case than Colonel Tallmadge, no doubt from the consideration that he had been the means of bringing him into this awful predicament, by inducing Colonel Jameson to have him conducted back when on the way to Arnold's quarters. A letter lies before us, written by Tallmadge to Colonel Samuel B. Webb, one of Washington's aides-de-camp. "Poor André, who has been under my charge almost ever since he was taken, has yesterday had his trial, and though his sentence is not known, a disgraceful death is undoubtedly allotted to him. By Heavens, Colonel Webb, I never saw a man whose fate I foresaw whom I so sincerely pitied. He

is a young fellow of the greatest accomplishments, and was the prime minister of Sir Harry on all occasions. He has unbosomed his heart to me so fully, and indeed let me know almost every motive of his actions since he came out on his late mission, that he has endeared me to him exceedingly. Unfortunate man! He will undoubtedly suffer death to-morrow; and though he knows his fate, seems to be as cheerful as if he were going to an assembly. I am sure he will go to the gallows less fearful for his fate, and with less concern than I shall behold the tragedy. Had he been tried by a court of ladies, he is so genteel, handsome, polite a young gentleman, that I am confident they would have acquitted him. But enough of André, who, though he dies lamented, falls justly."

The execution was to have taken place on the 1st of October, at five o'clock in the afternoon; but in the interim Washington received a second letter from Sir Henry Clinton, dated September 30th, expressing an opinion that the board of inquiry had not been rightly informed of all the circumstances on which a judgment ought to be formed, and that, in order that he might be perfectly apprised of the state of the matter before he proceeded to put that judgment in execution, he should

send a commission on the following day, composed of Lieutenant-Governor Elliot, William Smith, chief justice of the province, and Lieutenant-General Robertson, to wait near Dobbs Ferry, for permission and safe conduct to meet Washington, or such persons as he should appoint to converse with them on the subject.

This letter caused a postponement of the execution, and General Greene was sent to meet the commissioners at Dobbs Ferry. They came up in the morning of the 1st of October, in a schooner, with a flag of truce, and were accompanied by Colonel Beverley Robinson. General Robertson, however, was the only commissioner permitted to land, the others not being military officers. A long conference took place between him and General Greene, without any agreement of opinion upon the question at issue. Greene returned to camp promising to report faithfully to Washington the arguments urged by Robertson, and to inform the latter of the result.

A letter also was delivered to Greene for Washington, which Arnold had sent by the commissioners, in which the traitor reasserted the right he had possessed, as commanding officer of the department, to transact all the matters with which André was inculpated, and insisted that the latter ought not to suffer for

them. "But," added he, "if after this just and candid representation of Major André's case, the board of general officers adhere to their former opinion, I shall suppose it dictated by passion and resentment; and if that gentleman should suffer the severity of their sentence, I shall think myself bound, by every tie of duty and honor, to retaliate on such unhappy persons of your army as may fall within my power, that the respect due to flags, and to the laws of nations, may be better understood and observed. I have further to observe, that forty of the principal inhabitants of South Carolina have justly forfeited their lives, which have hitherto been spared by the clemency of his Excellency, Sir Henry Clinton, who cannot in justice extend his mercy to them any longer, if Major André suffers; which, in all probability, will open a scene of blood at which humanity shudders.

"Suffer me to entreat your Excellency, for your own sake and the honor of humanity, and the love you have of justice, that you suffer not an unjust sentence to touch the life of Major André. But if this warning should be disregarded, and he suffer, I call Heaven and earth to witness that your Excellency will be justly answerable for the torrent of blood that may be spilt in consequence."

Beside this impudent and despicable letter, there was another from Arnold, containing the farce of a resignation, and concluding with the following sentence: "At the same time I beg leave to assure your Excellency, that my attachment to the true interests of my country is invariable, and that I am actuated by the same principle which has ever been the governing rule of my conduct in this unhappy contest."

The letters of Arnold were regarded with merited contempt. Greene, in a brief letter to General Robertson, informed him that he had made as full a report of their conference to the commander-in-chief, as his memory would serve, but that it had made no alteration in Washington's opinion and determination. Robertson was piqued at the brevity of the note, and professed to doubt whether Greene's memory had served him with sufficient fulness and exactness; he addressed therefore to Washington his own statement of reasoning on the subject; after despatching which he and the other commissioners returned in the schooner to New York.

During this day of respite André had conducted himself with his usual tranquillity. A likeness of himself, seated at a table in his guard-room, which he sketched with a pen and gave to the officer on guard, is still extant. It

being announced to him that one o'clock on the following day was fixed on for his execution, he remarked that, since it was his lot to die, there was still a choice in the mode; he therefore addressed the following note to Washington:

"Sir,—Buoyed above the terror of death by the consciousness of a life devoted to honorable pursuits, and stained with no action that can give me remorse, I trust that the request I make to your Excellency at this serious period, and which is to soften my last moments, will not be rejected. Sympathy towards a soldier will surely induce your Excellency and a military tribunal to adapt the mode of my death to the feelings of a man of honor.

"Let me hope, sir, that if aught in my character impresses you with esteem towards me; if aught in my misfortunes marks me as the victim of policy and not of resentment, I shall experience the operation of these feelings in your breast by being informed that I am not to die on a gibbet."

Had Washington consulted his feelings merely, this affecting appeal might not have been in vain, for though not impulsive, he was eminently benevolent. André himself had testified to the kind treatment he had expe-

rienced from the commander-in-chief since his capture, though no personal interview had taken place. Washington had no popular censure to apprehend should he exercise indulgence, for the popular feeling was with the prisoner. But he had a high and tenacious sense of the duties and responsibilities of his position, and never more than in this trying moment, when he had to elevate himself above the contagious sympathies of those around him, dismiss all personal considerations, and regard the peculiar circumstances of the case. The long course of insidious operations which had been pursued to undermine the loyalty of one of his most trusted officers; the greatness of the evil which the treason would have effected, if successful; the uncertainty how far the enemy had carried, or might still be carrying, their scheme of corruption, for anonymous intimations spoke of treachery in other quarters; all these considerations pointed this out as a case in which a signal example was required.

And what called for particular indulgence to the agent, if not instigator, of this enormous crime, who had thus been providentially detected in disguise, and with the means of its consummation concealed upon his person? His errand, as it has been eloquently urged, "viewed in the light of morality, and even of

that chivalry from which modern war pretends to derive its maxims, was one of infamy. He had been commissioned to buy with gold what steel could not conquer; to drive a bargain with one ready for a price to become a traitor; to count out the thirty pieces of silver by which British generals and British gentlemen were not ashamed to purchase the betrayal of a cause, whose shining virtue repelled their power, and dimmed the glory of their arms." *

Even the language of traffic in which this negotiation had been carried on between the pseudo-Gustavus and John Anderson, had, as has before been observed, something ignoble and debasing to the chivalrous aspirant who stooped to use it; especially when used as a crafty covering in bargaining for a man's soul. †

It has been alleged in André's behalf, as a mitigating circumstance, that he was involuntarily a spy. It is true, he did not come on

* Speech of the Hon. Henry J. Raymond, at the dedication of the André monument.

† See letter of Gustavus to John Anderson. "My partner of whom I hinted in a former letter, has about ten thousand pounds cash in hand, ready for a speculation, if any should offer; I have also one thousand pounds in hand, and can collect fifteen hundred more in two or three days. Add to this I have some credit. From these hints you can judge of the purchase that can be made."

shore in borrowed garb, nor with a design to pass himself off for another, and procure secret information; but he came, under cloak of midnight, in supposed safety, to effect the betrayal of a holy trust; and it was his undue eagerness to secure the objects of this clandestine interview, that brought him into the condition of an undoubted spy. It certainly should not soften our view of his mission, that he embarked in it without intending to subject himself to danger. A spice of danger would have given it a spice of heroism, however spurious. When the rendezvous was first projected, he sought, through an indirect channel, to let Arnold know that he would come out with a flag. (We allude to a letter written by him from New York on the 7th of September, under his feigned signature, to Colonel Sheldon; evidently intended to be seen by Arnold: "I will endeavor to obtain permission to go out with a flag.") If an interview had taken place under that sacred protection, and a triumphant treason had been the result, what a brand it would have affixed to André's name, that he had prostituted a flag of truce to such an end.

We dwell on these matters, not to check the sentiment of sympathy awakened in André's behalf by his personal qualities, but to vindicate the fair name of Washington from that

"blot" which some have attempted to cast upon it, because, in exercising his stern duty as protector of the public weal, during a time of secret treason, he listened to policy and justice rather than mercy. In doing so, he took counsel with some of his general officers. Their opinions coincided with his own—that under present circumstances, it was important to give a signal warning to the enemy, by a rigorous observance of the rules of war and the usages of nations in like cases.*

But although André's request as to the mode of his death was not to be granted, it was thought best to let him remain in uncertainty on the subject; no answer, therefore was

* We subjoin a British officer's view of André's case. "He was tried by a board of general officers as a spy, and condemned to be hanged. The American general has been censured for directing this ignominious sentence to be carried into execution; but doubtless Major André was well aware when he undertook the negotiation, of the fate that awaited him should he fall into the hands of the enemy. The laws of war award to spies the punishment of death. It would, therefore, be difficult to assign a reason why Major André should have been exempted from that fate to which all others are doomed under similar circumstances, although the amiable qualities of the man rendered the individual case a subject of peculiar commiseration."—*Origin and Services of the Coldstream Guards*, by Col. MacKinnon, vol. ii., p. 9.

returned to his note. On the morning of the 2d, he maintained a calm demeanor, though all around him were gloomy and silent. He even rebuked his servant for shedding tears. Having breakfasted, he dressed himself with care in the full uniform of a British officer, which he had sent for to New York, placed his hat upon the table, and accosting the officers on guard,—"I am ready," said he, "at any moment, gentlemen, to wait upon you."

He walked to the place of execution between two subaltern officers, arm in arm, with a serene countenance, bowing to several gentlemen whom he knew. Colonel Tallmadge accompanied him, and we quote his words. "When he came within sight of the gibbet, he appeared to be startled, and inquired with some emotion whether he was not to be shot. Being informed that the mode first appointed for his death could not consistently be altered, he exclaimed: 'How hard is my fate!' but immediately added, 'it will soon be over.' I then shook hands with him under the gallows, and retired." *

While waiting near the gallows until preparations were made, says another authority who was present, he evinced some nervousness, putting his foot on a stone and rolling it; and

* MSS. of Col. B. Tallmadge, in possession of his daughter, Mrs. J. P. Cushman, of Troy, N. Y.

making an effort to swallow, as if checking an hysterical affection of the throat. All things being ready, he stepped into the wagon; appeared to shrink for an instant, recovering himself, exclaimed: "It will be but a momentary pang!"

Taking off his hat and stock, and opening his shirt collar, he deliberately adjusted the noose to his neck, after which he took out a handkerchief, and tied it over his eyes. Being told by the officer in command that his arms must be bound, he drew out a second handkerchief, with which they were pinioned. Colonel Scammel now told him that he had an opportunity to speak, if he desired it. His only reply was, "I pray you to bear witness that I meet my fate like a brave man." The wagon moved from under him, and left him suspended. He died almost without a struggle.* He remained suspended for about half an hour, during which time a deathlike stillness prevailed over the surrounding multitude. His remains were interred within a few yards of the place of his execution; whence they were transferred to England in 1821, by the British consul, then resident in New York, and were buried in Westminster Abbey, near a mural monument which had been erected to his memory.

* Thacher's *Military Journal*, p. 275.

Never has any man, suffering under like circumstances, awakened a more universal sympathy, even among those of the country against whom he had practised. His story is one of the touching themes of the Revolution, and his name is still spoken of with kindness in the local traditions of the neighborhood where he was captured.

Washington, in a letter to the President of Congress, passed a high eulogium on the captors of André, and recommended them for a handsome gratuity; for having, in all probability, prevented one of the severest strokes that could have been meditated by the enemy. Congress accordingly expressed, in a formal vote, a high sense of their virtuous and patriotic conduct; awarded to each of them a farm, a pension for life of two hundred dollars, and a silver medal, bearing on one side an escutcheon on which was engraved the word FIDELITY, and on the other side the motto, *Vincit amor patriæ*. These medals were delivered to them by General Washington at headquarters, with impressive ceremony.

Isaac Van Wart, one of the captors, had been present at the execution of André, and was deeply affected by it. He was not fond of recalling the subject, and in after life could rarely speak of André without tears.

Joshua H. Smith, who aided in bringing André and Arnold together, was tried by a court-martial, on a charge of participating in the treason, but was acquitted, no proof appearing of his having had any knowledge of Arnold's plot, though it was thought he must have been conscious of something wrong in an interview so mysteriously conducted.

Arnold was now made brigadier-general in the British service, and put on an official level with honorable men who scorned to associate with the traitor. What golden reward he was to have received had his treason been successful, is not known; but six thousand three hundred and fifteen pounds sterling were paid to him, as a compensation for losses which he pretended to have suffered in going over to the enemies of his country.

The vilest culprit, however, shrinks from sustaining the obloquy of his crimes. Shortly after his arrival in New York, Arnold published an address to the inhabitants of America, in which he endeavored to vindicate his conduct. He alleged that he had originally taken up arms merely to aid in obtaining a redress of grievances. He had considered the Declaration of Independence precipitate, and the reasons for it obviated by the subsequent proffers of the British government; and he inveighed

against Congress for rejecting those offers, without submitting them to the people.

Finally, the treaty with France, a proud, ancient, and crafty foe, the enemy of the Protestant faith and of real liberty, had completed, he said, the measure of his indignation, and determined him to abandon a cause sustained by iniquity and controlled by usurpers.

Besides this address, he issued a proclamation inviting the officers and soldiers of the American army, who had the real interest of their country at heart, and who were determined to be no longer the tools and dupes of Congress, and of France, to rally under the royal standard, and fight for true American liberty; holding out promises of large bounties and liberal subsistence, with compensation for all the implements and accoutrements of war they might bring with them.

Speaking of this address, "I am at a loss," said Washington, "which to admire most, the confidence of Arnold in publishing it, or the folly of the enemy in supposing that a production signed by so infamous a character will have any weight with the people of these States, or any influence upon our officers abroad." He was right. Both the address and the proclamation were regarded by Americans with the contempt they merited. None

rallied to the standard of the renegade but a few deserters and refugees, who were already within the British lines, and prepared for any desperate or despicable service.*

* The following passages of a letter written by Sir Thomas Romilly in London, Dec. 12, 1780, to the Rev. John Roget, are worthy of citation :

"What do you think of Arnold's conduct? You may well suppose he does not want advocates here. I cannot join with them. If he thought the Americans not justified in continuing the war, after the offer of such favorable terms as the commissioners held out to them, why did he keep his command for two years afterwards? . . .

"The arguments used by Clinton and Arnold in their letters to Washington, to prove that André could not be considered as a spy, are, first, that he had with him, when he was taken, a protection of Arnold, who was at that time acting under a commission of the Congress, and, therefore, competent to give protections. Certainly he was, to all strangers to his negotiations with Clinton, but not to André, who knew him to be at that time a traitor to the Congress—nay, more, whose protection was granted for no other purpose but to promote and give effect to his treachery. In the second place, they say that at the time he was taken he was upon neutral ground ; but they do not deny that he had been within the American lines in disguise. The letters written by André himself, show a firm, cool intrepidity worthy a more glorious end. . . .

"The fate of this unfortunate young man, and the manly style of his letters, have raised more compassion here than the loss of thousands in battle, and

Colonel John Laurens, former aide-de-camp to Washington, in speaking of André's fate, observed: "Arnold must undergo a punishment comparatively more severe, in the permanent, increasing torment of a mental hell." Washington doubted it. "He wants feeling," said he. "From some traits of his character which have lately come to my knowledge, he seems to have been so hackneyed in villainy, and so lost to all sense of honor and shame, that, while his faculties will enable him to continue his sordid pursuits, there will be no time for remorse." And in a letter to Governor Reed, Washington writes: "Arnold's conduct is so villainously perfidious, that there are no terms that can describe the baseness of his heart. That overruling Providence which has so often and so remarkably interposed in our favor, never manifested itself more conspicuously than in the timely discovery of his horrid intention to sur-

have excited a warmer indignation against the Americans, than any former act of the Congress. When the passions of men are so deeply affected, you will not expect to find them keep within the bounds of reason. Panegyrics of the gallant André are unbounded; they call him the English Mutius, and talk of erecting monuments to his memory. Certainly, no man in his situation could have behaved with more determined courage; but this situation was by no means such as to admit of these exaggerated praises."

render the post and garrison of West Point into the hands of the enemy. . . . The confidence and folly which have marked the subsequent conduct of this man, are of a piece with his villainy, and all three are perfect in their kind."

Mrs. Arnold, on arriving at her father's house in Philadelphia, had decided on a separation from her husband, to whom she could not endure the thoughts of returning after his dishonor. This course, however, was not allowed her. The executive council, wrongfully suspecting her of having aided in the correspondence between her husband and André, knowing its treasonable tendency, ordered her to leave the State within fourteen days, and not to return during the continuance of the war. "We tried every means," writes one of her connections, "to prevail on the council to permit her to stay among us, and not to compel her to go to that infernal villain, her husband.* Mr. Shippen (her father) had promised the council, and Mrs. Arnold had signed a writing to the same purpose, engaging not to write to General Arnold any letters whatever, and to receive no letters without showing them to the council, if she was permitted to stay." It was all in vain, and,

** Letters and Papers Relating to the Provincial History of Pennsylvania*, p. lxiv.

Major-General Benedict Arnold Carried in Effigy.

DESCRIPTION OF THE FIGURES.

A stage raised on the body of a cart, on which was an effigy of General ARNOLD sitting; this was dressed in regimentals, had two faces, emblematical of his traiterous conduct, a mask in his left hand, and a letter in his right from Belzebub, telling him that he had done all the mischief he could do, and now he must hang himself.

At the back of the General was a figure of the Devil, dressed in black robes, shaking a purse of money at the general's left ear, and in his right hand a pitchfork, ready to drive him into hell as the reward due for the many crimes which the thief of gold had made him commit.

In the front of the stage and before General Arnold, was placed a large lanthorn of transparent paper, with the consequences of his crimes thus delineated, *i. e.*, on one part, General Arnold on his knees before the Devil, who is pulling him into the flames—a label from the General's mouth with these words, "My dear Sir, I have served you faithfully;" to which the Devil replies, "And I'll reward you." On another side, two ropes from a gallows, inscribed, "The Traitors reward." And on the front of the lanthorn was wrote the following:

"MAJOR GERERAL BENEDICT ARNOLD, late COMMANDER of the FORT WEST-POINT. THE CRIME OF THIS MAN IS HIGH TREASON. "He has deserted the important post WEST-POINT, on Hudson's River, committed to his charge by His Excellency the Commander in Chief, and is gone off to the enemy at New-York.

"His design to have given up this fortress to our enemies, has been discovered by the goodness of the Omniscient Creator, who has not only prevented his carrying it into execution, but has thrown into our hands ANDRÉ, the Adjutant-General of their army, who was detected in the character of a spy.

"The treachery of this ungrateful General is held up to public view, for the exposition of infamy; and to proclaim with joyful acclamation, another instance of the interposition of bounteous Providence.

"The effigy of this ingrate is therefore hanged (for want of his body) as a Traitor to his native country, and a Betrayer of the laws of honour."

The procession began about four o'clock, in the following order:

Several Gentlemen mounted on horse-back.
A line of Continental Officers.
Sundry Gentlemen in a line.
A guard of the City Infantry.
Just before the cart, drums and fifes playing the Rogues March.
Guards on each side.

The procession was attended with a numerous concourse of people, who after expressing their abhorence of the Treason and the Traitor, committed him to the flames, and left both the effigy and the original to sink into ashes and oblivion.

A REPRESENTATION of the FIGURES exhibited and paraded through the Streets of PHILADELPHIA, on *Saturday*, the 30*th* of *September*, 1780.

strongly against her will, she rejoined her husband in New York. His fear for her personal safety from the fury of the people proved groundless. That scrupulous respect for the female sex, so prevalent throughout the United States, was her safeguard. While the whole country resounded with execrations of her husband's guilt; while his effigy was dragged through the streets of town and village, burnt at the stake, or swung on the gibbet, she passed on secure from injury or insult. The execrations of the populace were silenced at her approach. Arriving at nightfall at a village where they were preparing for one of these burnings in effigy, the pyre remained unkindled, the people dispersed quietly to their homes, and the wife of the traitor was suffered to sleep in peace.

She returned home but once, about five years after her exile, and was treated with such coldness and neglect that she declared she never could come again. In England her charms and virtues, it is said, procured her sympathy and friendship, and helped to sustain the social position of her husband, who, however, was "generally slighted, and sometimes insulted."* She died in London, in

* *Letters and Papers Relating to the Provincial History of Pennsylvania*, p. lxvi.

the winter of 1796. In recent years it has been maintained that Mrs. Arnold was actually cognizant and participant of her husband's crime; but, after carefully examining all the proofs adduced, we remain of opinion that she was innocent.

We have been induced to enter thus largely into the circumstances of this story, from the undiminished interest taken in it by the readers of American history. Indeed, a romance has been thrown around the memory of the unfortunate André, which increases with the progress of years; while the name of Arnold will stand sadly conspicuous to the end of time, as the only American officer of note, throughout all the trials and vicissitudes of the Revolution, who proved traitor to the glorious cause of his country.

NOTE.

The following fragment of a letter from Arnold's mother to him in early life, was recently put into our hands. Well would it have been for him had he adhered to its pious though humble counsels.

Norwich April 12 1754.

dear childe. I received yours of 1 instant and was glad to hear that you was well: pray my dear let your first consern be to make your pease with god as itt is of all conserns of ye greatest importence. Keep a stedy watch over your thoughts, words and

actions. be dutifull to superiors obliging to equalls and affibel to inferiors. . . .

from your affectionate
Hannah Arnold.

P. S. I have sent you fifty shillings youse itt prudently as you are acountabell to God and your father. Your father and aunt joyns with me in love and servis to Mr. Cogswell and ladey and yourself Your sister is from home. To Mr.

benedict arnold
at
canterbury

your father put
twenty more

MAJOR JOHN ANDRÉ. PEN-AND-INK SKETCH.

Chapter V.

Greene Takes Command at West Point—Insidious Attempts to Shake the Confidence of Washington in his Officers—Plan to Entrap Arnold—Character of Sergeant Champe—Court of Inquiry into the Conduct of Gates—Greene Appointed to the Southern Department—Washington's Instructions to him—Incursions from Canada—Mohawk Valley Ravaged—State of the Army—Reforms Adopted—Enlistment for the War—Half Pay.

AS the enemy would now possess the means, through Arnold, of informing themselves thoroughly about West Point, Washington hastened to have the works completed and strongly garrisoned. Major-General Greene was ordered to march with the Jersey, New York, New Hampshire, and Stark's brigades, and take temporary command (ultimately to be transferred to General Heath), and the Pennsylvania troops, which had been thrown into the fortress at the time of Arnold's desertion, were relieved. Wash-

ington himself took post with his main army, at Prakeness, near Passaic Falls in New Jersey.

Insidious attempts had been made by anonymous papers, and other means, as we have already hinted, to shake the confidence of the commander-in-chief in his officers, and especially to implicate General St. Clair in the late conspiracy. Washington was exceedingly disturbed in mind for a time, and engaged Major Henry Lee, who was stationed with his dragoons on the lines, to probe the matter through secret agents in New York. The result proved the utter falsehood of these insinuations.

At the time of making this inquiry, a plan was formed at Washington's suggestion to get possession of the person of Arnold. The agent pitched upon by Lee for the purpose, was the sergeant-major of cavalry in his legion, John Champe by name, a young Virginian about twenty-four years of age, whom he describes as being rather above the middle size—full of bone and muscle; with a saturnine countenance, grave, thoughtful, and taciturn, of tried loyalty and inflexible courage. By many promises and much persuasion, Lee brought him to engage in the attempt. "I have incited his thirst for fame," writes he, "by impressing on his mind the virtue and glory of the act."

Champe was to make a pretended desertion to the enemy at New York. There he was to enlist in a corps which Arnold was raising, insinuate himself into some menial or military situation about his person, and watching for a favorable moment, was, with the aid of a confederate from Newark, to seize him in the night, gag him, and bring him across the Hudson into Bergen woods, in the Jerseys.

Washington, in approving the plan, enjoined and stipulated that Arnold should be brought to him alive. "No circumstance whatever," said he, "shall obtain my consent to his being put to death. The idea which would accompany such an event, would be, that ruffians had been hired to assassinate him. My aim is to make a public example of him, and this should be strongly impressed upon those who are employed to bring him off."

The pretended desertion of the sergeant took place on the night of October 20th, and was attended with difficulties. He had to evade patrols of horse and foot, besides stationary guards and irregular scouting parties. Major Lee could render him no assistance other than to delay pursuit, should his departure be discovered. About eleven o'clock the sergeant took his cloak, valise, and orderly book, drew his horse from the picket, and mounting, set

out on his hazardous course, while the major retired to rest.

He had not been in bed half an hour, when Captain Carnes, officer of the day, hurrying into his quarters, gave word that one of the patrols had fallen in with a dragoon, who, on being challenged, put spurs to his horse, and escaped. Lee pretended to be annoyed by the intrusion, and to believe that the pretended dragoon was some countryman of the neighborhood. The captain was piqued; made a muster of the dragoons, and returned with word that the sergeant-major was missing, who had gone off with horse, baggage, arms, and orderly book.

Lee was now compelled to order out a party in pursuit under Cornet Middleton, but in so doing, he contrived many delays, that, by the time they were in the saddle, Champe had an hour's start. His pursuers, too, were obliged, in the course of the night, to halt occasionally, dismount and examine the road, to guide themselves by the horse's tracks. At daybreak they pressed forward more rapidly, and from the summit of a hill descried Champe, not more than half a mile in front. The sergeant at the same moment caught sight of his pursuers, and now the chase became desperate. Champe had originally intended to make for

Paulus Hook, but changed his course, threw his pursuers at fault, and succeeded in getting abreast of two British galleys at anchor near the shore beyond Bergen. He had no time to lose. Cornet Middleton was but two or three hundred yards behind him. Throwing himself off his horse, and running through a marsh, he plunged into the river, and called to the galleys for help. A boat was sent to his assistance, and he was conveyed on board of one of the vessels.

For a time the whole plan promised to be successful. Champe enlisted in Arnold's corps; was employed about his person; and every arrangement was made to surprise him at night in a garden in the rear of his quarters, convey him to a boat, and ferry him across the Hudson. On the appointed night, Lee, with three dragoons and three led horses, was in the woods of Hoboken, on the Jersey shore, waiting to receive the captive. Hour after hour passed away, — no boat approached, — day broke; and the major, with his dragoons and his led horses, returned perplexed and disappointed to the camp.

Washington was extremely chagrined at the issue of the undertaking, fearing that the sergeant had been detected in the last scene of his perilous and difficult enterprise. It subse-

quently proved, that on the day preceding the night fixed on for the capture, Arnold had removed his quarters to another part of the town, to superintend the embarkation of troops, preparing (as was rumored) for an expedition to be directed by himself, and that the American legion, consisting chiefly of American deserters, had been transferred from their barracks to one of the transports. Among the troops thus transferred was John Champe; nor was he able for a long time to effect his escape, and resume his real character of a loyal and patriotic soldier. He was rewarded when he did so, by the munificence of the commander-in-chief, and the admiration of his old comrades in arms; having so nobly braved, in his country's cause, not merely danger, but a long course of obloquy.

We have here to note the altered fortunes of the once prosperous General Gates. His late defeat at Camden had withered the laurels snatched at Saratoga. As in the one instance he had received exaggerated praise, so in the other, he suffered undue censure. The sudden annihilation of an army from which so much had been expected, and the retreat of the general before the field was absolutely lost, appeared to demand a strict investigation. Congress therefore passed a resolution (October

5th), requiring Washington to order a court of inquiry into the conduct of Gates as commander of the Southern army, and to appoint some other officer to the command until the inquiry should be made. Washington at once selected Greene for the important trust, the well-tried officer whom he would originally have chosen, had his opinion been consulted, when Congress so unadvisedly gave the command to Gates. In the present instance his choice was in concurrence with the expressed wishes of the delegates of the three Southern States, conveyed to him by one of their number.

Washington's letter of instructions to Greene (October 22d) showed the implicit confidence he reposed in the abilities and integrity of that excellent officer. "Uninformed as I am," writes he, "of the enemy's force in that quarter, of our own, or of the resources which it will be in our power to command, for carrying on the war, I can give you no particular instructions, but must leave you to govern your self entirely according to your own prudence and judgment, and the circumstances in which you find yourself. I am aware that the nature of the command will offer you embarrassments of a singular and complicated nature, but I rely upon your abilities and exertions for everything your means will enable you to effect."

With regard to the court of inquiry, it was to be conducted in the quarter in which Gates had acted, where all the witnesses were, and where alone the requisite information could be obtained. Baron Steuben, who was to accompany Greene to the South, was to preside, and the members of the court were to be such general and field-officers of the continental troops as were not present at the battle of Camden, or, having been present, were not wanted as witnesses, or were persons to whom General Gates had no objection. The affair was to be conducted with the greatest impartiality, and with as much despatch as circumstances would permit.

Washington concludes his letter of instructions to Greene, with expressions dictated by friendship as well as official duty. "You will keep me constantly advised of the state of your affairs, and of every material occurrence. My warmest wishes for your success, reputation, health, and happiness accompany you."

Ravaging incursions from Canada had harassed the northern parts of the State of New York of late, and laid desolate some parts of the country from which Washington had hoped to receive great supplies of flour for the armies. Major Carleton, a nephew of Sir Guy, at the head of a motley force, European, tory, and

Indian, had captured Forts Anne and George. Sir John Johnson also, with Joseph Brant, and a mongrel half-savage crew, had laid waste the fertile region of the Mohawk River, and burned the villages of Schoharie and Caughnawaga. The greatest alarm prevailed throughout the neighboring country. Governor Clinton himself took the field at the head of the militia, but before he arrived at the scene of mischief, the marauders had been encountered and driven back by General Van Rensselaer and the militia of those parts; not, however, until they had nearly destroyed the settlements on the Mohawk. Washington now put Brigadier-General James Clinton (the governor's brother) in command of the Northern department.

The state of the army was growing more and more a subject of solicitude to the commander-in-chief. He felt weary of struggling on, with such scanty means, and such vast responsibility. The campaign, which, at its commencement, had seemed pregnant with favorable events, had proved sterile and inactive, and was drawing to a close. The short terms for which most of the troops were enlisted must soon expire, and then the present army would be reduced to a mere shadow. The saddened state of his mind may be judged from his letters. An ample one addressed to

General Sullivan, fully lays open his feelings and his difficulties. "I had hoped," writes he, "but hoped in vain, that a prospect was displaying which would enable me to fix a period to my military pursuits, and restore me to domestic life. The favorable disposition of Spain, the promised succor from France; the combined force in the West Indies, the declaration of Russia (acceded to by other governments of Europe, and humiliating to the naval pride and power of Great Britain), the superiority of France and Spain by sea in Europe, the Irish claims and English disturbances, formed, in the aggregate, an opinion in my breast, which is not very susceptible of peaceful dreams, that the hour of deliverance was not far distant; since, however unwilling Great Britain might be to yield the point, it would not be in her power to continue the contest. But alas! these prospects, flattering as they were, have proved delusory, and I see nothing before us but accumulating distress.

"We have been half of our time without provisions, and are likely to continue so. We have no magazines, nor money to form them; and in a little time we shall have no men, if we have no money to pay them. In a word, the history of the war is a history of false hopes and temporary devices, instead of sys-

tem and economy. It is in vain, however, to look back, nor is it our business to do so. Our case is not desperate, if virtue exists in the people, and there is wisdom among our rulers. But to suppose that this great Revolution can be accomplished by a temporary army, that this army will be subsisted by State supplies, and that taxation alone is adequate to our wants, is in my opinion absurd, and as unreasonable as to expect an inversion in the order of nature to accommodate itself to our views. If it was necessary, it could be proved to any person of a moderate understanding, that an annual army, raised on the spur of the occasion, besides being unqualified for the end designed, is, in various ways which could be enumerated, ten times more expensive than a permanent body of men under good organization and military discipline, which never was nor ever will be the case with new troops. A thousand arguments resulting from experience and the nature of things, might also be adduced to prove that the army, if it is dependent upon State supplies, must disband or starve, and that taxation alone, especially at this late hour, cannot furnish the means to carry on the war." *

We will here add, that the repeated and

* *Writings of Washington*, vii., 228.

elaborate reasonings of Washington, backed by dear-bought experience, slowly brought Congress to adopt a system suggested by him for the organization and support of the army, according to which, troops were to be enlisted to serve throughout the war, and all officers who continued in service until the return of peace were to receive half pay during life.

Chapter VII.

The Marquis Lafayette and his Light Infantry—Proposes a Brilliant Stroke—Preparations for an Attack on the British Posts on New York Island—Visit of the Marquis of Chastellux to the American Camp—Washington at Headquarters—Attack on the British Posts Given up—Stark Forages Westchester County—Exploit of Tallmadge on Long Island.

THE Marquis Lafayette at this time commanded the advance guard of Washington's army, composed of six battalions of light infantry. They were better clad than the other soldiery: in trim uniforms, leathern helmets, with crests of horse-hair. The officers were armed with spontoons, the non-commissioned officers with fusees; both with short sabres which the marquis had brought from France, and presented to them. He was proud of his troops, and had a young man's ardor for active service. The inactivity which had prevailed for some time past was intolerable to him. To satisfy his impatient

longings, Washington had permitted him in the beginning of October to attempt a descent at night on Staten Island, to surprise two Hessian encampments. It had fallen through for want of boats, and other requisites, but he saw enough, he said, to convince him that the Americans were altogether fitted for such enterprises.*

The marquis saw with repining the campaign drawing to a close, and nothing done that would rouse the people of America, and be spoken of at the court of Versailles. He was urgent with Washington that the campaign should be terminated by some brilliant stroke. "Any enterprise," writes he, "will please the people of this country, and show them that we do not mean to remain idle when we have men; even a defeat, provided it were not disastrous, would have its good effect."

Complaints, he hinted, had been made in France of the prevailing inactivity. "If anything could decide the ministry to yield us the succor demanded," writes he, "it would be our giving the nation a proof that we are ready."

The brilliant stroke, suggested with some detail by the marquis, was a general attack upon Fort Washington, and the other posts at the north end of the island of New York, and,

* *Mémoires de Lafayette*, tom. i., p. 337.

under certain circumstances, which he specified, *make a push for the city.*

Washington regarded the project of his young and ardent friend with a more sober and cautious eye. "It is impossible, my dear marquis," replies he, "to desire more ardently than I do to terminate the campaign by some happy stroke; but we must consult our means rather than our wishes, and not endeavor to better our affairs by attempting things, which for want of success may make them worse. We are to lament that there has been a misapprehension of our circumstances in Europe; but to endeavor to recover our reputation, we should take care that we do not injure it more. Ever since it became evident that the allied arms could not co-operate this campaign I have had an eye to the point you mention, determined, if a favorable opening should offer, to embrace it; but, so far as my information goes, the enterprise would not be warranted. It would, in my opinion, be imprudent to throw an army of ten thousand men upon an island, against nine thousand, exclusive of seamen and militia. This, from the accounts we have, appears to be the enemy's force. All we can do at present, therefore, is to endeavor to gain a more certain knowledge of their situation, and act accordingly."

The British posts in question were accordingly reconnoitered from the opposite banks of the Hudson, by Colonel Gouvion, an able French engineer. Preparations were made to carry the scheme into effect, should it be determined upon, in which case Lafayette was to lead the attack at the head of his light troops, and be supported by Washington with his main force; while a strong foraging party sent by General Heath from West Point to White Plains in Westchester County, to draw the attention of the enemy in that direction and mask the real design, was, on preconcerted signals, to advance rapidly to King's Bridge, and co-operate.

Washington's own officers were kept in ignorance of the ultimate object of the preparatory movements. "Never," writes his aide-de-camp, Colonel Humphreys, "never was a plan better arranged, and never did circumstances promise more sure or complete success. The British were not only unalarmed, but our own troops were misguided in their operations." As the plan was not carried into effect, we have forborne to give many of its details.

At this juncture, the Marquis de Chastellux arrived in camp. He was on a tour of curiosity, while the French troops at Rhode Island were in winter quarters, and came on the invi-

tation of his relative, the Marquis Lafayette, who was to present him to Washington. In after years he published an account of his tour, in which we have graphic sketches of the camp and the commanders. He arrived with his aides-de-camp on the afternoon of November 23d, and sought the headquarters of the commander-in-chief. They were in a large farm-house. There was a spacious tent in the yard before it for the general, and several smaller tents in an adjacent field for his guards. Baggage wagons were arranged about for the transportation of the general's effects, and a number of grooms were attending to very fine horses belonging to general officers and their aides-de-camp. Everything was in perfect order. As De Chastellux rode up, he observed Lafayette in front of the house, conversing with an officer, tall of stature, with a mild and noble countenance. It was Washington. De Chastellux alighted and was presented by Lafayette. His reception was frank and cordial. Washington conducted him into the house. Dinner was over, but Generals Knox, Wayne, and Howe, and Colonels Hamilton, Tilghman, and other officers were still seated round the board. Washington introduced De Chastellux to them, and ordered a repast for the former and his aides-de-camp: all remained at table,

and a few glasses of claret and Madeira promoted sociability. The marquis soon found himself at his ease with Washington. "The goodness and benevolence which characterize him," observes he, "are felt by all around him; but the confidence he inspires is never familiar; it springs from a profound esteem for his virtues, and a great opinion of his talents."

In the evening, after the guests had retired, Washington conducted the marquis to a chamber prepared for him and his aides-de-camp, apologizing with nobly frank and simple politeness, that his scanty quarters did not afford more spacious accommodation.

The next morning, horses were led up after breakfast; they were to review the troops and visit Lafayette's encampment, seven miles distant. The horses which De Chastellux and Washington rode, had been presented to the latter by the State of Virginia. There were fine blood horses also for the aides-de-camp. "Washington's horses," writes De Chastellux, "are as good as they are beautiful, and all perfectly trained. He trains them all himself. He is a very good and a very hardy cavalier, leaping the highest barriers, and riding very fast, without rising in the stirrups, bearing on the bridle, or suffering his horse to run as if wild."

In the camp of artillery where General Knox

received them, the marquis found everything in perfect order, and conducted in the European style. Washington apologized for no salute being fired. Detachments were in movement at a distance, in the plan of operations, and the booming of guns might give an alarm, or be mistaken for signals.

Incessant and increasing rain obliged Washington to make but a short visit to Lafayette's camp, whence, putting spurs to his horse, he conducted his French visitors back to headquarters on as fast a gallop as bad roads would permit.

There were twenty guests at table that day at headquarters. The dinner was in the English style, large dishes of butcher's meat and poultry, with different kinds of vegetables, followed by pies and puddings, and a dessert of hickory nuts. Washington's fondness for the latter was noticed by the marquis, and indeed was often a subject of remark. He would sit picking them by the hour after dinner, as he sipped his wine and conversed.

One of the general's aides-de-camp sat by him at the end of the table, according to custom, to carve the dishes, and circulate the wine. Healths were drunk and toasts were given; the latter were sometimes given by the general through his aide-de-camp. The conversation

was tranquil and pleasant. Washington willingly entered into some details about the principal operations of the war, "but always" says the marquis, "with a modesty and conciseness which proved sufficiently that it was out of pure complaisance that he consented to talk about himself."

Wayne was pronounced agreeable and animated in conversation, and possessed of wit; but Knox, with his genial aspect and cordial manners, seems to have won De Chastellux's heart. "He is thirty-five years of age," writes he, "very stout but very active; a man of talent and intelligence: amiable, gay, sincere, and loyal. It is impossible to know him without esteeming him, and to see him without loving him."

It was about half-past seven when the company rose from the table, shortly after which those who were not of the household departed. There was a light supper of three or four dishes, with fruit, and abundance of hickory nuts; the cloth was soon removed; Bordeaux and Madeira wine were placed upon the table, and conversation went on. Colonel Hamilton was the aide-de-camp who officiated, and announced the toasts as they occurred. "It is customary," writes the marquis, "towards the end of the supper to call upon each one for a *sentiment*,

that is to say, the name of some lady to whom he is attached by some sentiment either of love, friendship, or simple preference."

It is evident there was extra gayety at the table of the commander-in-chief during this visit, in compliment to his French guests; but we are told, that gay conversation often prevailed at the dinners at headquarters among the aides-de-camp and young officers, in which Washington took little part, though a quiet smile would show that he enjoyed it.

We have been tempted to quote freely the remarks of De Chastellux, as they are those of a cultivated man of society, whose position and experience made him a competent judge, and who had an opportunity of observing Washington in a familiar point of view.

Speaking of his personal appearance, he writes: "His form is noble and elevated, well-shaped and exactly proportioned; his physiognomy mild and agreeable, but such, that one does not speak in particular of any one of his traits; and that in quitting him there remains simply the recollection of a fine countenance. His air is neither grave nor familiar; one sees sometimes on his forehead the marks of thought but never of inquietude: while inspiring respect he inspires confidence, and his smile is always that of benevolence.

"Above all it is interesting," continues the marquis, "to see him in the midst of the general officers of his army. General in a republic, he has not the imposing state of a marshal of France who gives the *order;* hero in a republic, he excites a different sort of respect, which seems to originate in this sole idea, that the welfare of each individual is attached to his person."

He sums up his character in these words: "Brave without temerity; laborious without ambition; generous without prodigality; noble without pride; virtuous without severity; he seems always to stop short of that limit, where the virtues, assuming colors more vivid, but more changeable and dubious, might be taken for defects."

During the time of this visit of the marquis to headquarters, news was received of the unexpected and accidental appearance of several British armed vessels in the Hudson; the effect was to disconcert the complicated plan of a *coupe de main* upon the British posts, and finally, to cause it to be abandoned.

Some parts of the scheme were attended with success. The veteran Stark, with a detachment of twenty-five hundred men, made an extensive forage in Westchester County, and Major Tallmadge with eighty men, chiefly dis-

mounted dragoons of Sheldon's regiment, crossed in boats from the Connecticut shore to Long Island, where the Sound was twenty miles wide; traversed the island on the night of the 22d of November, surprised Fort George at Coram, captured the garrison of fifty-two men, demolished the fort, set fire to magazines of forage, and recrossed the Sound to Fairfield, without the loss of a man; an achievement which drew forth a high eulogium from Congress.

At the end of November the army went into winter quarters: the Pennsylvania line in the neighborhood of Morristown, the Jersey line about Pompton, the New England troops at West Point, and the other posts of the Highlands; and the New York line was stationed at Albany, to guard against any invasion from Canada.

The French army remained stationed at Newport, excepting the Duke of Lauzun's legion, which was cantoned at Lebanon in Connecticut. Washington's headquarters were established at New Windsor on the Hudson.

We will now turn to the South to note the course of affairs in that quarter during the last few months.

Chapter VII.

Rigorous Measures of Cornwallis in South Carolina—Ferguson Sent to Scour the Mountain Country between the Catawba and the Yadkin—Cornwallis in a Hornet's Nest—Movements of Ferguson—Mountain Men and Fierce Men from Kentucky—Battle of King's Mountain—Retrograde March of Cornwallis.

CORNWALLIS having, as he supposed, entirely crushed the "rebel cause" in South Carolina, by the defeats of Gates and Sumter, remained for some time at Camden, detained by the excessive heat of the weather and the sickness of part of his troops, broken down by the hardships of campaigning under a southern sun. He awaited also supplies and reinforcements.

Immediately after the victory at Camden, he had ordered the friends to royalty in North Carolina "to arm and intercept the beaten army of General Gates," promising that he

would march directly to the borders of that province in their support; he now detached Major Patrick Ferguson to its western confines, to keep the war alive in that quarter. This resolute partisan had with him his own corps of light infantry, and a body of royalist militia of his own training. His whole force was between eleven and twelve hundred men, noted for activity and alertness, and unincumbered with baggage or artillery.

His orders were to skirr the mountain country between the Catawba and the Yadkin, harass the whigs, inspirit the tories, and embody the militia under the royal banner. This done, he was to repair to Charlotte, the capital of Mecklenburg County, where he would find Lord Cornwallis, who intended to make it his rendezvous. Should he, however, in the course of his tour, be threatened by a superior force, he was immediately to return to the main army. No great opposition, however, was apprehended, the Americans being considered totally broken up and dispirited.

During the suspense of his active operations in the field, Cornwallis instituted rigorous measures against Americans who continued under arms, or, by any other acts, manifested what he termed "a desperate perseverance in opposing His Majesty's Government." Among

these were included many who had taken refuge in North Carolina. A commissioner was appointed to take possession of their estates and property; of the annual product of which a part was to be allowed for the support of their families, the residue to be applied to the maintenance of the war. Letters from several of the principal inhabitants of Charleston having been found in the baggage of the captured American generals, the former were accused of breaking their parole, and holding a treasonable correspondence with the armed enemies of England; they were in consequence confined on board of prison ships, and afterwards transported to St. Augustine in Florida.

Among the prisoners taken in the late combats, many, it was discovered, had British protections in their pockets; these were deemed arrant runagates, amenable to the penalties of the proclamation issued by Sir Henry Clinton on the 3d of June; they were therefore led forth from the provost and hanged, almost without the form of an inquiry.

These measures certainly were not in keeping with the character for moderation and benevolence usually given to Lord Cornwallis; but they accorded with the rancorous spirit manifested toward each other both by whigs and tories in Southern warfare. If they were

intended by his lordship as measures of policy, their effect was far different from what he anticipated; opposition was exasperated into deadly hate, and a cry of vengeance was raised throughout the land. Cornwallis decamped from Camden, and set out for North Carolina. In the subjugation of that province, he counted on the co-operation of the troops which Sir Henry Clinton was to send to the lower part of Virginia, which, after reducing the Virginians to obedience, were to join his lordship's standard on the confines of North Carolina.

Advancing into the latter province, Cornwallis took post at Charlotte, where he had given rendezvous to Ferguson. Mecklenburg, of which this was the capital, was, as the reader may recollect, the "heady, high-minded" county where the first declaration of independence had been made, and his lordship from uncomfortable experience soon pronounced Charlotte "the Hornet's Nest of North Carolina."

The surrounding country was wild and rugged, covered with close and thick woods, and crossed in every direction by narrow roads. All attempts at foraging were worse than useless. The plantations were small and afforded scanty supplies.

The inhabitants were stanch whigs, with

the pugnacious spirit of the old Covenanters. Instead of remaining at home and receiving the king's money in exchange for their produce, they turned out with their rifles, stationed themselves in covert places, and fired upon the foraging parties; convoys of provisions from Camden had to fight their way, and expresses were shot down and their despatches seized.

The capture of his expresses was a sore annoyance to Cornwallis, depriving him of all intelligence concerning the movements of Colonel Ferguson, whose arrival he was anxiously awaiting. The expedition of that doughty partisan officer here calls for especial notice. He had been chosen for this military tour as being calculated to gain friends by his conciliating disposition and manners, and his address to the people of the country was in that spirit: "We come not to make war upon women and children, but to give them money and relieve their distresses." Ferguson, however, had a loyal hatred of whigs, and to his standard flocked many rancorous tories, besides outlaws and desperadoes, so that with all his conciliating intentions, his progress through the country was attended by many exasperating excesses.

He was on his way to join Cornwallis when

a chance for a signal exploit presented itself. An American force under Colonel Elijah Clarke of Georgia, was retreating to the mountain districts of North Carolina, after an unsuccessful attack upon the British post at Augusta. Ferguson resolved to cut off their retreat. Turning towards the mountains, he made his way through a rugged wilderness and took post at Gilberttown, a small frontier village of log-houses. He was encouraged to this step, say the British chroniclers, by the persuasion that there was no force in that part of the country able to look him in the face. He had no idea that the marauds of his followers had arrayed the very wilderness against him. "All of a sudden," say the chroniclers just cited, "a numerous, fierce, and unexpected enemy sprung up in the depths of the desert. The scattered inhabitants of the mountains assembled without noise or warning, under the conduct of six or seven of their militia colonels, to the number of six hundred strong, daring, well-mounted, and excellent horsemen." *

These, in fact, were the people of the mountains which form the frontiers of the Carolinas and Georgia, "mountain men," as they were commonly called, a hardy race, half huntsmen, half herdsmen, inhabiting deep, narrow val-

* *Annual Register*, 1781, p. 52.

leys, and fertile slopes, adapted to grazing, watered by the coldest of springs and brightest of streams, and embosomed in mighty forest trees. Being subject to inroads and surprisals from the Chickasaws, Cherokees, and Creeks, a tacit league existed among them for mutual defense, and it only needed, as in the present instance, an alarm to be circulated through their settlements by swift messengers, to bring them at once to the point of danger. Beside these, there were other elements of war suddenly gathering in Ferguson's vicinity. A band of what were termed "the wild and fierce" inhabitants of Kentucky, with men from other settlements west of the Alleghanies, had crossed the mountains, led by Colonels Campbell and Boone, to pounce upon a quantity of Indian goods at Augusta; but had pulled up on hearing of the repulse of Clarke. The stout yeomen, also, of the district of Ninety-Six, roused by the marauds of Ferguson, had taken the field, under the conduct of Colonel James Williams, of Granville County. Here, too, were hard riders and sharpshooters, from Holston River, Powel's Valley, Botetourt, Fincastle, and other parts of Virginia, commanded by Colonels Campbell, Cleveland, Shelby, and Sevier. Such were the different bodies of mountaineers and backwoodsmen,

suddenly drawing together from various parts to the number of three thousand.

Threatened by a force so superior in numbers and fierce in hostility, Ferguson issued an address to rouse the tories. "The Backwater men have crossed the mountain," said he, "McDowell, Hampton, Shelby, and Cleveland are at their head. If you choose to be trodden upon forever and ever by a set of mongrels, say so at once, and let women look out for real men to protect them. If you desire to live and bear the name of men, grasp your arms in a moment and run to camp."

The taunting appeal produced but little effect. In this exigency, Ferguson remembered the instructions of Cornwallis, that he should rejoin him should he find himself threatened by a superior force; breaking up his quarters, therefore, he pushed for the British army, sending messengers ahead to apprise his lordship of his danger. Unfortunately for him, his missives were intercepted.

Gilberttown had not long been vacated by Ferguson and his troops, when the motley host we have described thronged in. Some were on foot, but the greater part on horseback. Some were in homespun garb; but the most part in hunting-shirts, occasionally decorated with colored fringe and tassels. Each

man had his long rifle and hunting-knife, his wallet, or knapsack and blanket, and either a buck's tail or sprig of evergreen in his hat. Here and there an officer appeared in the continental uniform of blue and buff, but most preferred the half-Indian hunting-dress. There was neither tent nor tent equipage, neither baggage nor baggage-wagon to encumber the movements of that extemporaneous host. Prompt warriors of the wilderness, with them it was "seize the weapon—spring into the saddle—and away!" In going into action, it was their practice to dismount, tie their horses to the branches of trees, or secure them in some other way, so as to be at hand for use when the battle was over, either to pursue a flying enemy, or make their own escape by dint of hoof.

There was a clamor of tongues for a time at Gilberttown; groups on horseback and foot in every part, holding hasty council. Being told that Ferguson had retreated by the Cherokee road toward North Carolina, about nine hundred of the hardiest and best mounted set out in urgent pursuit; leaving those who were on foot, or weakly mounted, to follow on as fast as possible. Colonel William Campbell, of Virginia, having come from the greatest distance, was allowed to have command of the

whole party; but there was not much order or subordination. Each colonel led his own men in his own way.

In the evening they arrived at the Cowpens, a grazing neighborhood. Here two beeves were killed and given to be cut up, cooked and eaten as quick as possible. Before those who were slow or negligent had half prepared their repast, marching orders were given, and all were again in the saddle. A rapid and irregular march was kept up all night in murky darkness and through a heavy rain. About daybreak they crossed Broad River, where an attack was apprehended. Not finding the enemy, they halted, lit their fires, made their morning's meal, and took a brief repose. By nine o'clock they were again on the march. The rainy night had been succeeded by a bright October morning, and all were in high spirits. Ferguson, they learnt, had taken the road toward King's Mountain, about twelve miles distant. When within three miles of it their scouts brought in word that he had taken post on its summit. The officers now held a short consultation on horseback, and then proceeded. The position taken by Ferguson was a strong one. King's Mountain rises out of a broken country, and is detached, on the north, from inferior heights by a deep valley,

so as to resemble an insulated promontory about half a mile in length, with sloping sides, excepting on the north. The mountain was covered for the most part with lofty forest trees, free from underwood, interspersed with boulders and masses of gray rock. The forest was sufficiently open to give free passage to horsemen.

As the Americans drew nearer, they could occasionally, through openings of the woodland, descry the glittering of arms along a level ridge, forming the crest of King's Mountain. This, Ferguson had made his stronghold; boasting that "if all the rebels out of hell should attack him, they would not drive him from it."

Dismounting at a small stream which runs through a ravine, the Americans picketed their horses or tied them to the branches of the trees, and gave them in charge of a small guard. They had formed themselves into three divisions of nearly equal size, and prepared to storm the heights on three sides. Campbell, seconded by Shelby, was to lead the centre division; Sevier with McDowell the right, and Cleveland and Williams the left. The divivisions were to scale the mountain as nearly as possible at the same time. The fighting directions were in frontier style. When once in

action, every one must act for himself. The men were not to wait for the word of command, but to take good aim and fire as fast as possible. When they could no longer hold their ground, they were to get behind trees, or retreat a little, and return to the fight, but never to go quite off.

Campbell allowed time for the flanking divisions to move to the right and left along the base of the mountain, and take their proper distances; he then pushed up in front with the centre division, he and Shelby, each at the head of his men. The first firing was about four o'clock, when a picket was driven in by Cleveland and Williams on the left, and pursued up the mountain. Campbell soon arrived within rifle distance of the crest of the mountain, whence a sheeted fire of musketry was opened upon him. He instantly deployed his men, posted them behind trees, and returned the fire with deadly effect.

Ferguson, exasperated at being hunted into this mountain fastness, had been chafing in his rocky lair and meditating a furious sally. He now rushed out with his regulars, made an impetuous charge with the bayonet, and dislodging his assailants from their coverts, began to drive them down the mountain, they not having a bayonet among them. He had not

proceeded far when a flanking fire was opened by one of the other divisions; facing about and attacking this he was again successful, when a third fire was opened from another quarter. Thus, as fast as one division gave way before the bayonet, another came to its relief; while those who had given way rallied and returned to the charge. The nature of the fighting ground was more favorable to the rifle than the bayonet, and this was a kind of warfare in which the frontier men were at home. The elevated position of the enemy also was in favor of the Americans, securing them from the danger of their own cross-fire. Ferguson found that he was completely in the hunters' toils, beset on every side; but he stood bravely at bay, until the ground around him was strewed with the killed and wounded, picked off by the fatal rifle. His men were at length broken, and retreated in confusion along the ridge. He galloped from place to place endeavoring to rally them, when a rifle ball brought him to the ground, and his white horse was seen careering down the mountain without a rider.

This closed the bloody fight; for Ferguson's second in command, seeing all further resistance hopeless, hoisted a white flag, beat a parley, and sued for quarters. One hundred and

fifty of the enemy had fallen, and as many had been wounded; while of the Americans, but twenty were killed, though a considerable number were wounded. Among those slain was Colonel James Williams, who had commanded the troops of Ninety-Six, and proved himself one of the most daring of the partisan leaders.

Eight hundred and ten men were taken prisoners, one hundred of whom were regulars, the rest royalists. The rancor awakened by civil war was shown in the treatment of some of the prisoners. A court-martial was held the day after the battle, and a number of tory prisoners who had been bitter in their hostility to the American cause, and flagitious in their persecution of their countrymen were hanged. This was to revenge the death of American prisoners hanged at Camden and elsewhere.

The army of mountaineers and frontier men, thus fortuitously congregated, did not attempt to follow up their signal blow. They had no general scheme, no plan of campaign; it was the spontaneous rising of the sons of the soil, to revenge it on its invaders, and, having effected their purpose, they returned in triumph to their homes. They were little aware of the importance of their achievement. The battle of King's Mountain, inconsiderable as it was in the numbers engaged, turned the tide of

Southern warfare. The destruction of Ferguson and his corps gave a complete check to the expedition of Cornwallis. He began to fear for the safety of South Carolina, liable to such sudden irruptions from the mountains; lest, while he was facing to the north, these hordes of stark-riding warriors might throw themselves behind him, and produce a popular combustion in the province he had left. He resolved, therefore, to return with all speed to that province and provide for its security.

On the 14th of October he commenced his retrograde and mortifying march, conducting it in the night, and with such hurry and confusion, that nearly twenty wagons, laden with baggage and supplies, were lost. As he proceeded, the rainy season set in; the brooks and rivers became swollen, and almost impassable; the roads deep and miry; provisions and forage scanty; the troops generally sickly, having no tents. Lord Cornwallis himself was seized with a bilious fever, which obliged him to halt two days in the Catawba settlement, and afterwards to be conveyed in a wagon, giving up the command to Lord Rawdon.

In the course of this desolate march, the British suffered as usual from the vengeance of an outraged country, being fired upon from behind trees and other coverts by the yeo-

manry; their sentries shot down at their encampments; their foraging parties cut off. "The enemy," writes Lord Rawdon, "are mostly mounted militia, not to be overtaken by our infantry, nor to be safely pursued in this strong country by our cavalry."

For two weeks were they toiling on this retrograde march through the deep roads, and a country cut up by water-courses, with the very elements arrayed against them. At length, after fording the Catawba where it was six hundred yards wide, and three and a half deep, and where a handful of riflemen might have held them in check, the army arrived at Winnsborough, in South Carolina. Hence, by order of Cornwallis, Lord Rawdon wrote on the 24th of October to Brigadier-General Leslie, who was at that time in the Chesapeake, with the force detached by Sir Henry Clinton for a descent upon Virginia, suggesting the expediency of his advancing to North Carolina, for the purpose of co-operation with Cornwallis, who feared to proceed far from South Carolina, lest it should be again in insurrection.

In the meantime his lordship took post at Winnsborough. It was a central position, where he might cover the country from partisan incursions, obtain forage and supplies, and await the co-operation of General Leslie.

Chapter VIII.

Marion—His Character—Bye-Names—Haunts—Tarleton in Quest of him—Sumter on the West Side of the Santee—His Affair with Tarleton at Black Stock Hill—Gates at Hillsborough—His Domestic Misfortunes—Arrival of Greene—His Considerate Conduct—Gates Retires to his Estate—Condition of the Army—Stratagem of Colonel Washington at Clermont—Morgan Detached to the District of Ninety-Six—Greene Posts himself on the Pedee.

THE victory at King's Mountain had set the partisan spirit throughout the country in a blaze. Francis Marion was soon in the field. He had been made a brigadier-general, by Governor Rutledge, but his brigade, as it was called, was formed of neighbors and friends, and was continually fluctuating in numbers. He was nearly fifty years of age, and small of stature, but hardy, healthy, and vigorous. Brave but not braggart, never avoiding danger, but never rashly seeking it. Taciturn and abstemious,

a strict disciplinarian, careful of the lives of his men, but little mindful of his own life. Just in his dealings, free from everything selfish or mercenary, and incapable of a meanness. He had his haunts and strongholds in the morasses of the Pedee and Black rivers. His men were hardy and abstemious as himself; they ate their meat without salt, often subsisted on potatoes, were scantily clad, and almost destitute of blankets. Marion was full of stratagems and expedients. Sallying forth from his morasses, he would overrun the lower districts, pass the Santee, beat up the small posts in the vicinity of Charleston, cut up the communication between that city and Camden; and having struck some signal blow, so as to rouse the vengeance of the enemy, would retreat again into his fenny fastnesses. Hence the British gave him the bye-name of the *Swamp Fox*, but those of his countrymen who knew his courage, his loftiness of spirit and spotless integrity, considered him the *Bayard of the South*.

Tarleton, who was on duty in that part of the country, undertook, as he said, to draw the swamp fox from his cover. He accordingly marched cautiously down the east bank of the Wateree with a body of dragoons and infantry, in compact order. The fox, however,

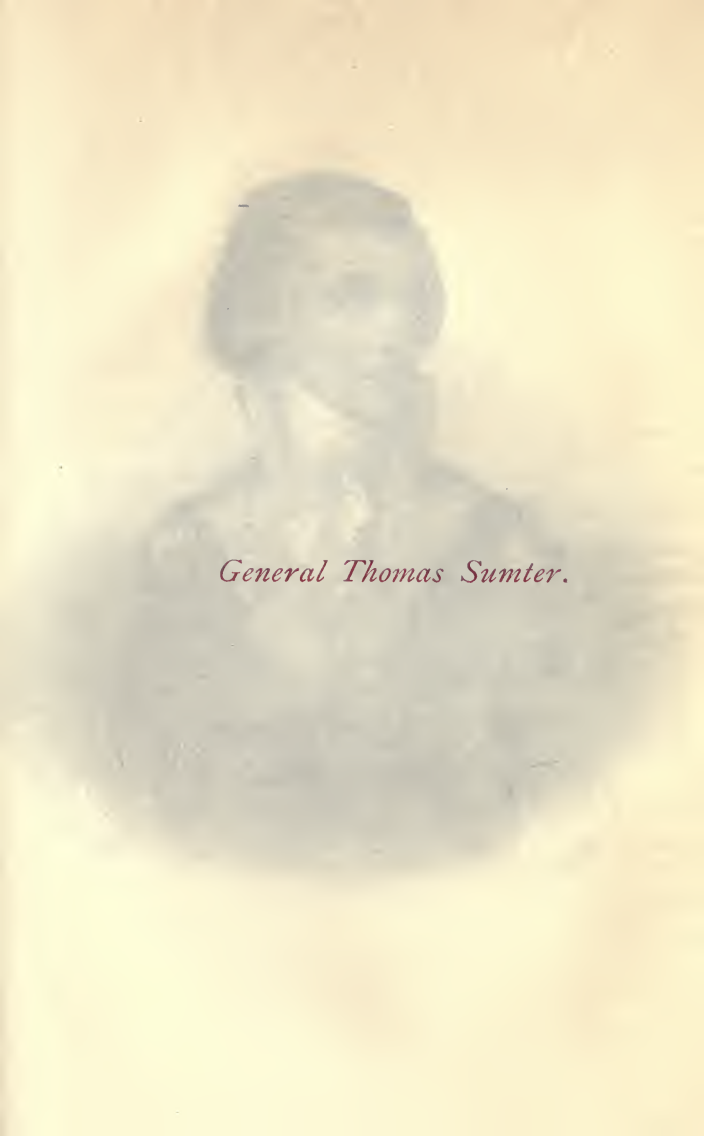
kept close; he saw that the enemy was too strong for him. Tarleton now changed his plan. By day he broke up his force into small detachments or patrols, giving them orders to keep near enough to each other to render mutual support if attacked, and to gather together at night.

The artifice had its effect. Marion sallied forth from his covert just before daybreak to make an attack upon one of these detachments, when, to his surprise, he found himself close upon the British camp. Perceiving the snare that had been spread for him, he made a rapid retreat. A close pursuit took place. For seven hours Marion was hunted from one swamp and fastness to another; several stragglers of his band were captured, and Tarleton was in strong hopes of bringing him into action, when an express came spurring from Cornwallis, calling for the immediate services of himself and his dragoons in another quarter.

Sumter was again in the field! That indefatigable partisan having recruited a strong party in the mountainous country, to which he retreated after his defeat on the Wateree, had reappeared on the west side of the Santee, repulsed a British party sent against him, killing its leader; then, crossing Broad River, had effected a junction with Colonels Clarke

and Brannan, and now menaced the British posts in the district of Ninety-Six.

It was to disperse this head of partisan war that Tarleton was called off from beleaguering Marion. Advancing with his accustomed celerity, he thought to surprise Sumter on the Enoree River. A deserter apprised the latter of his danger. He pushed across the river, but was hotly pursued, and his rear-guard roughly handled. He now made for the Tyger River, noted for turbulence and rapidity; once beyond this, he might disband his followers in the woods. Tarleton, to prevent his passing it unmolested, spurred forward in advance of his main body with one hundred and seventy dragoons and eighty mounted men of the infantry. Before five o'clock (November 20th), his advance guard overtook and charged the rear of the Americans, who retreated to the main body. Sumter finding it impossible to cross Tyger River in safety, and being informed that the enemy, thus pressing upon him, were without infantry or cannon, took post on Black Stock Hill, with a rivulet and rail fence in front, the Tyger River in the rear and on the right flank, and a large log barn on the left. The barn was turned into a fortress, and a part of the force stationed in it to fire through the apertures between the logs.



General Thomas Sumter.

C. W. Peale
H. F. Hall

Tarleton halted on an opposite height to await the arrival of his infantry, and part of his men dismounted to ease their horses. Sumter seized this moment for an attack. He was driven back after some sharp fighting. The enemy pursued, but were severely galled by the fire from the log barn. Enraged at seeing his men shot down, Tarleton charged with his cavalry, but found it impossible to dislodge the Americans from their rustic fortress. At the approach of night he fell back to join his infantry, leaving the ground strewed with his killed and wounded. The latter were treated with great humanity by Sumter. The loss of the Americans was only three killed and four wounded.

Sumter, who had received a severe wound in the breast, remained several hours on the field of action; but, understanding the enemy would be powerfully reinforced in the morning, he crossed the Tyger River in the night. He was then placed on a litter between two horses, and thus conducted across the country by a few faithful adherents. The rest of his little army dispersed themselves through the woods. Tarleton, finding his enemy had disappeared, claimed the credit of a victory; but those who considered the affair rightly, declared that he had received a severe check.

While the attention of the enemy was thus

engaged by the enterprises of Sumter and Marion and their swamp warriors, General Gates was gathering together the scattered fragments of his army at Hillsborough. When all were collected, his whole force, exclusive of militia, did not exceed fourteen hundred men. It was, as he said, "rather a shadow than a substance." His troops, disheartened by defeat, were in a forlorn state, without clothing, without pay, and sometimes without provisions. Destitute of tents, they constructed hovels of fence-rails, poles, brush-wood, and the stalks of indian corn, the officers faring no better than the men.

The vanity of Gates was completely cut down by his late reverses. He had lost, too, the confidence of his officers, and was unable to maintain discipline among his men; who, through their irregularities, became a terror to the country people.

On the retreat of Cornwallis from Charlotte, Gates advanced to that place to make it his winter quarters. Huts were ordered to be built, and a regular encampment was commenced. Smallwood, with a body of militia, was stationed below on the Catawba to guard the road leading through Camden; and further down was posted Brigadier-General Morgan, with a corps of light troops.

To add to his depression of spirits, Gates received the melancholy intelligence of the death of an only son, and, while he was yet writhing under the blow, came official despatches informing him of his being superseded in command. A letter from Washington, we are told, accompanied them, sympathizing with him in his domestic misfortunes, adverting with peculiar delicacy to his reverses in battle, assuring him of his undiminished confidence in his zeal and capacity, and his readiness to give him the command of the left wing of his army as soon as he could make it convenient to join him.

The effect of this letter was overpowering. Gates was found walking about his room in the greatest agitation, pressing the letter to his lips, breaking forth into ejaculations of gratitude and admiration, and when he could find utterance to his thoughts, declared that its tender sympathy and considerate delicacy had conveyed more consolation and delight to his heart than he had believed it possible ever to have felt again.*

General Greene arrived at Charlotte, on the

* Related by Dr. Wm. Reed, at that time superintendent of the hospital department at Hillsborough, to Alex. Garden, aide-de-camp to Greene.—Garden's *Anecdotes*, p. 350.

2d of December. On his way from the North he had made arrangements for supplies from the different States; and had left the Baron Steuben in Virginia to defend that State and procure and send on reinforcements and stores for the Southern army. On the day following his arrival, Greene took formal command. The delicacy with which he conducted himself towards his unfortunate predecessor is said to have been "edifying to the army." Consulting with his officers as to the court of inquiry on the conduct of General Gates, ordered by Congress, it was determined that there was not a sufficient number of general officers in camp to sit upon it; that the state of General Gates's feelings, in consequence of the death of his son, disqualified him from entering upon the task of his defense; and that it would be indelicate in the extreme to press on him an investigation, which his honor would not permit him to defer. "Besides," added Greene, "his is a case of misfortune, and the most honorable course to be pursued, both with regard to General Gates and the government, is to make such representations as may obtain a revision of the order of Congress directing an inquiry into his conduct." In this opinion all present concurred.

Gates, in fact, when informed in the most delicate manner of the order of Congress, was

urgent that a court of inquiry should be immediately convened; he acknowledged there was some important evidence that could not at present be procured; but he relied on the honor and justice of the court to make allowance for the deficiency. He was ultimately brought to acquiesce in the decision of the council of war for the postponement, but declared that he could not think of serving until the matter should have been properly investigated. He determined to pass the interim on his estate in Virginia. Greene, in a letter to Washington (December 7th), writes: "General Gates sets out to-morrow for the northward. Many officers think very favorably of his conduct, and that, whenever an inquiry takes place, he will honorably acquit himself."

The kind and considerate conduct of Greene on the present occasion, completely subdued the heart of Gates. The coldness, if not ill-will, with which he had hitherto regarded him, was at an end, and, in all his subsequent correspondence with him, he addressed him in terms of affection.

We take pleasure in noting the generous conduct of the General Assembly of Virginia towards Gates. It was in session when he arrived at Richmond. "Those fathers of the commonwealth," writes Colonel H. Lee, in his

memoirs, "appointed a committe of their body to wait on the vanquished general, and assure him of their high regard and esteem, that their remembrance of his former glorious services was never to be obliterated by any reverse of fortune; but, ever mindful of his great merit, they would omit no opportunity of testifying to the world the gratitude which Virginia, as a member of the American Union, owed to him in his military character."

Gates was sensibly affected and comforted by this kind reception, and retired with a lightened heart to his farm in Berkeley County.

The whole force at Charlotte, when Greene took command, did not much exceed twenty-three hundred men, and more than half of them were militia. It had been broken in spirit by the recent defeat. The officers had fallen into habits of negligence; the soldiers were loose and disorderly, without tents and camp equipage; badly clothed and fed, and prone to relieve their necessities by depredating upon the inhabitants. Greene's letters written at the time, abound with military aphorisms suggested by the squalid scene around him. "There must be either pride or principle," said he, "to make a soldier. No man will think himself bound to fight the battles of a State that leaves him perishing for want of

covering; nor can you inspire a soldier with the sentiment of pride, while his situation renders him an object of pity, rather than of envy. Good feeling is the first principle of good service. It is impossible to preserve discipline where troops are in want of everything —to attempt severity will only thin the ranks by a more hasty desertion."

The state of the country in which he was to act was equally discouraging. "It is so extensive," said he, "and the powers of government so weak, that everybody does as he pleases. The inhabitants are much divided in their political sentiments, and the whigs and tories pursue each other with little less than savage fury. The back country people are bold and daring; but the people upon the seashore are sickly, and but indifferent militia."

"War here," observes he in another letter, "is upon a very different scale to what it is at the northward. It is a plain business there. The geography of the country reduces its operations to two or three points. But here it is everywhere; and the country is so full of deep rivers and impassable creeks and swamps, that you are always liable to misfortunes of a capital nature.

"The whigs and tories," adds he, "are continually out in small parties, and all the mid-

dle country is so disaffected, that you cannot lay in the most trifling magazine, or send a wagon through the country with the least article of stores without a guard."

A recent exploit had given some animation to the troops. Lieutenant-Colonel Washington, detached with a troop of light horse to check a foraging party of the enemy, scoured the country within thirteen miles of Camden. Here he found a body of loyalist militia strongly posted at Clermont, the seat of Colonel Rugeley, their tory commander. They had ensconced themselves in a large barn, built of logs, and had fortified it by a slight intrenchment and a line of abatis. To attack it with cavalry was useless. Colonel Washington dismounted part of his troops to appear like infantry; placed on two wagon-wheels the trunk of a pine-tree, shaped and painted to look like a field-piece, brought it to bear upon the enemy, and, displaying his cavalry, sent in a flag summoning the garrison to surrender instantly, on pain of having their log castle battered about their ears. The garrison, to the number of one hundred and twelve men, with Colonel Rugeley at their head, gave themselves up prisoners of war.* Cornwallis, mentioning the ludicrous affair in a letter to Tarleton, adds

* Williams's Narrative.

sarcastically: "Rugeley will not be made a brigadier." The unlucky colonel never again appeared in arms.

The first care of General Greene was to reorganize his army. He went to work quietly but resolutely: called no councils of war; communicated his plans and intentions to few, and such only as were able and willing to aid in executing them. "If I cannot inspire respect and confidence by an independent conduct," said he, "it will be impossible to instill discipline and order among the troops." His efforts were successful; the army soon began to assume what he termed a military complexion.

He was equally studious to promote harmony among his officers, of whom a number were young, gallant, and intelligent. It was his delight to have them at his genial but simple table, where parade and restraint were banished, and pleasant and instructive conversation was promoted; which, next to reading, was his great enjoyment. The manly benignity of his manners diffused itself round his board, and a common sentiment of affection for their chief united the young men in a kind of brotherhood.

Finding the country round Charlotte exhausted by repeated foragings, he separated

the army into two divisions. One, about one thousand strong, was commanded by Brigadier-General Morgan, of rifle renown, and was composed of four hundred continental infantry, under Lieutenant-Colonel Howard of the Maryland line, two companies of Virginia militia under Captains Tripplet and Tate, and one hundred dragoons, under Lieutenant-Colonel Washington. With these Morgan was detached towards the district of Ninety-Six, in South Carolina, with orders to take a position near the confluence of the Pacolet and Broad rivers, and assemble the militia of the country. With the other division, Greene made a march of toilful difficulty through a barren country, with wagons and horses quite unfit for service, to Hicks's Creek, in Chesterfield district, on the east side of the Pedee River, opposite the Cheraw Hills. There he posted himself, on the 26th, partly to discourage the enemy from attempting to possess themselves of Cross Creek, which would give them command of the greatest part of the provisions of the lower country—partly to form a camp of repose; "and no army," writes he, "ever wanted one more, the troops having totally lost their discipline."

"I will not pain your Excellency," writes he to Washington, "with further accounts of

the wants and sufferings of this army; but I am not without great apprehension of its entire dissolution, unless the commissary's and quarter-master's departments can be rendered more competent to the demands of the service. Nor are the clothing and hospital departments upon a better footing. Not a shilling in the pay chest, nor a prospect of any for months to come. This is really making bricks without straw."

Governor Rutledge also wrote to Washington from Greene's camp, on the 28th of December, imploring aid for South Carolina. "Some of the stanch inhabitants of Charleston," writes he, "have been sent to St. Augustine, and others are to follow. The enemy have hanged many people, who, from fear, or the impracticability of removing, had received protection or given paroles, and from attachment to, had afterwards taken part with us. They have burnt a great number of houses, and turned many women, formerly of good fortune, with their children (whom their husbands or parents, from an unwillingness to join the enemy, had left), almost naked into the woods. Their cruelty and the distresses of the people are indeed beyond description. I entreat your Excellency, therefore, seriously to consider the unhappy state of South Carolina and Georgia;

and I rely on your humanity and your knowledge of their importance to the Union, for such speedy and effectual support, as may compel the enemy to evacuate every part of these countries." *

* *Correspondence of the Revolution*, iii., 188.

Chapter IX.

Hostile Embarkations to the South—Arnold in Command—Necessitous State of the Country—Washington Urges a Foreign Loan—Mission of Colonel Laurens to France to Seek Aid in Men and Money—Grievances of the Pennsylvania Line—Mutiny—Negotiations with the Mutineers—Articles of Accommodation—Policy Doubted by Washington—Rigorous Course Adopted by him with other Malcontents Successful—Ratification of the Articles of Confederation of the States.

THE occurrences recorded in the last few chapters made Washington apprehend a design on the part of the enemy to carry the stress of war into the Southern States. Conscious that he was the man to whom all looked in time of emergency, and who was, in a manner, responsible for the general course of military affairs, he deeply felt the actual impotency of his position.

In a letter to Franklin, who was minister plenipotentiary at the court of Versailles, he

strongly expresses his chagrin. "Disappointed of the second division of French troops, but more especially in the expected naval superiority, which was the pivot upon which everything turned, we have been compelled to spend an inactive campaign, after a flattering prospect at the opening of it, and vigorous struggles to make it a decisive one on our part. Latterly we have been obliged to become spectators of a succession of detachments from the army at New York in aid of Lord Cornwallis, while our naval weakness, and the political dissolution of a great part of our army, put it out of our power to counteract them at the southward or to take advantage of them here."

The last of these detachments to the South took place on the 20th of December, but was not destined, as Washington had supposed, for Carolina. Sir Henry Clinton had received information that the troops already mentioned as being under General Leslie in the Chesapeake, had, by orders from Cornwallis, sailed for Charleston, to reinforce his lordship; and this detachment was to take their place in Virginia. It was composed of British, German, and refugee troops, about seventeen hundred strong, and was commanded by Benedict Arnold, now a brigadier-general in His

Majesty's service. Sir Henry Clinton, who distrusted the fidelity of the man he had corrupted, sent with him Colonels Dundas and Simcoe, experienced officers, by whose advice he was to be guided in every important measure. He was to make an incursion into Virginia, destroy the public magazines, assemble and arm the loyalists, and hold himself ready to co-operate with Lord Cornwallis. He embarked his troops in a fleet of small vessels, and departed on his enterprise animated by the rancorous spirit of a renegade, and prepared, as he vaunted, to give the Americans a blow "that would make the whole continent shake." We shall speak of his expedition hereafter.

As Washington beheld one hostile armament after another winging its way to the South, and received applications from that quarter for assistance, which he had not the means to furnish, it became painfully apparent to him that the efforts to carry on the war had exceeded the natural capabilities of the country. Its widely diffused population and the composition and temper of some of its people, rendered it difficult to draw together its resources. Commerce was almost extinct; there was not sufficient natural wealth on which to found a revenue; paper currency had depreciated through want of funds for its redemption,

until it was nearly worthless. The mode of supplying the army by assessing a proportion of the productions of the earth, had proved ineffectual, oppressive, and productive of an alarming opposition. Domestic loans yielded but trifling assistance. The patience of the army was nearly exhausted; the people were dissatisfied with the mode of supporting the war, and there was reason to apprehend, that, under the pressure of impositions of a new and odious kind, they might imagine they had only exchanged one kind of tyranny for another.

We give but a few of many considerations which Washington was continually urging upon the attention of Congress in his full and perspicuous manner; the end of which was to enforce his opinion that a foreign loan was indispensably necessary to a continuance of the war.

His earnest counsels and entreaties were at length successful in determining Congress to seek aid both in men and money from abroad. Accordingly, on the 28th of December they commissioned Lieutenant-Colonel John Laurens, special minister at the court of Versailles, to apply for such aid. The situation he had held, as aide-de-camp to the commander-in-chief, had given him an opportunity of observ-

ing the course of affairs, and acquainting himself with the wants and resources of the country; and he was instructed to confer with Washington, previous to his departure, as to the objects of his mission. Not content with impressing him verbally with his policy, Washington gave him a letter of instructions for his government, and to be used as occasion might require. In this he advised him to solicit a loan sufficiently large to be a foundation for substantial arrangements of finance, to revive public credit, and give vigor to future operations; next to a loan of money, a naval force was to be desired, sufficient to maintain a constant superiority on the American coast; also additional succor in troops. In a word, a means of co-operation by sea and land, with purse and sword, competent by a decided effort to attain, once for all, the great objects of the alliance, the liberty and independence of the United States.

He was to show, at the same time, the ample means possessed by the nation to repay the loan, from its comparative freedom from debt, and its vast and valuable tracts of unsettled lands, the variety and fertility of its climates and soils, and its advantages of every kind for a lucrative commerce, and rapid increase of population and prosperity.

Scarce had Colonel Laurens been appointed to this mission, when a painful occurrence proved the urgent necessity of the required aid.

In the arrangement for winter quarters, the Pennsylvania line, consisting of six regiments, was hutted near Morristown. These troops had experienced the hardships and privations common to the whole army. General Wayne, who commanded them, had a soldier's sympathy in the sufferings of his men, and speaks of them in feeling language: "Poorly clothed, badly fed, and worse paid," writes he, "some of them not having received a paper dollar for near twelve months; exposed to winter's piercing cold, to drifting snows and chilling blasts, with no protection but old worn-out coats, tattered linen overalls, and but one blanket between three men. In this situation the enemy begin to work upon their passions, and have found means to circulate some proclamations among them. . . . The officers in general, as well as myself, find it necessary to stand for hours every day exposed to wind and weather among the poor naked fellows, while they are working at their huts and redoubts, often assisting with our own hands, in order to produce a conviction to their minds that we share, and more than share, every vicissitude in common with them; sometimes asking to

participate their bread and water. The good effect of this conduct is very conspicuous, and prevents their murmuring in public; but the delicate mind and eye of humanity are hurt, very much hurt, at their visible distress and private complainings."

How strongly are here depicted the trials to which the soldiers of the Revolution were continually subjected. But the Pennsylvania line had an additional grievance peculiar to themselves. Many of them had enlisted to serve "for three years, or during war," that is to say, for less than three years should the war cease in less time. When, however, having served for three years, they sought their discharge, the officers, loth to lose such experienced soldiers, interpreted the terms of enlistment to mean three years, or to the end of the war, should it continue for a longer time.

This chicanery naturally produced great exasperation. It was heightened by the conduct of a deputation from Pennsylvania, which, while it left veteran troops unpaid, distributed gold by handfuls among raw six-month levies, whose time was expiring, as bounties on their re-enlisting for the war.

The first day of the new year arrived. The men were excited by an extra allowance of ar-

dent spirits. In the evening, at a preconcerted signal, a great part of the Pennsylvania line, non-commissioned officers included, turned out under arms, declaring their intention to march to Philadelphia, and demand redress from Congress. Wayne endeavored to pacify them; they were no longer to be pacified by words. He cocked his pistol; in an instant their bayonets were at his breast. "We love, we respect you," cried they, "but you are a dead man if you fire. Do not mistake us; we are not going to the enemy; were they now to come out, you would see us fight under your orders with as much resolution and alacrity as ever." *

Their threat was not an idle one. In an attempt to suppress the mutiny there was a bloody affray, in which numbers were wounded on both sides, among whom were several officers. One captain was killed.

Three regiments which had taken no part in the mutiny were paraded under their officers. The mutineers compelled them to join their ranks. Their number being increased to about thirteen hundred, they seized upon six field-pieces, and set out in the night for Philadelphia under command of their sergeants.

Fearing the enemy might take advantage

* Quincy's *Memoir of Major Shaw*, p. 85.

of this outbreak, Wayne detached a Jersey brigade to Chatham, and ordered the militia to be called out there. Alarm fires were kindled upon the hills; alarm guns boomed from post to post; the country was soon on the alert.

Wayne was not "Mad Anthony" on the present occasion. All his measures were taken with judgment and forecast. He sent provisions after the mutineers, lest they should supply their wants from the country people by force. Two officers of rank spurred to Philadelphia, to apprise Congress of the approach of the insurgents, and put it upon its guard. Wayne sent a despatch with news of the outbreak to Washington; he then mounted his horse, and accompanied by Colonels Butler and Stewart, two officers popular with the troops, set off after the mutineers, either to bring them to a halt, or to keep with them, and seek every occasion to exert a favorable influence over them.

Washington received Wayne's letter at his headquarters at New Windsor on the 3d of January. His first impulse was to set out at once for the insurgent camp. Second thoughts showed the impolicy of such a move. Before he could overtake the mutineers, they would either have returned to their duty, or their affair would be in the hands of Congress. How

far, too, could his own troops be left with safety, distressed as they were for clothing and provisions? Beside, the navigation of the Hudson was still open; should any disaffection appear in the neighboring garrison of West Point, the British might send up an expedition from New York to take advantage of it. Under these circumstances, he determined to continue at New Windsor.

He wrote to Wayne, however, approving of his intention to keep with the troops, and improve every favorable interval of passion. His letter breathes that paternal spirit with which he watched over the army; and that admirable moderation mingled with discipline with which he managed and moulded their wayward moods. "Opposition," said he, "as it did not succeed in the first instance, cannot be effectual while the men remain together, but will keep alive resentment, and may tempt them to turn about and go in a body to the enemy; who, by their emissaries, will use every argument and means in their power to persuade them that it is their only asylum; which if they find their passage stopped at the Delaware, and hear that the Jersey militia are collecting in their rear, they may think but too probable. I would, therefore recommend it to you to cross the Delaware with them, draw from them what they conceive

to be their principal grievances, and promise faithfully to represent to Congress and to the State the substance of them, and endeavor to obtain a redress. If they could be stopped at Bristol or Germantown, the better. I look upon it, that if you can bring them to a negotiation, matters may be afterwards accommodated; but that an attempt to reduce them by force will either drive them to the enemy, or dissipate them in such a manner that they will never be recovered."

How clearly one reads in this letter that temperate and magnanimous spirit which moved over the troubled waters of the Revolution, allayed the fury of the storms, and controlled everything into place.

Having visited the Highland posts of the Hudson, and satisfied himself of the fidelity of the garrisons, Washington ordered a detachment of eleven hundred men to be ready to march at a moment's warning. General Knox, also, was despatched by him to the Eastern States, to represent to their governments the alarming crisis produced by a long neglect of the subsistence of the army, and to urge them to send on immediately money, clothing, and other supplies for their respective lines.

In the meantime, as Washington had apprehended, Sir Henry Clinton received intelli-

gence at New York of the mutiny, and hastened to profit by it. Emissaries were despatched to the camp of the mutineers holding out offers of pardon, protection, and ample pay, if they would return to their allegiance to the crown. On the 4th of January, although the rain poured in torrents, troops and cannon were hurried on board of vessels of every description, and transported to Staten Island, Sir Henry accompanying them. There they were to be held in readiness, either to land at Amboy in the Jerseys, should the revolters be drawn in that direction, or to make a dash at West Point, should the departure of Washington leave that post assailable.

General Wayne and his companions, Colonels Butler and Stewart, had overtaken the insurgent troops on the 3d of January, at Middlebrook. They were proceeding in military form, under the control of a self-constituted board of sergeants whose orders were implicitly obeyed. A sergeant-major, who had formerly deserted from the British army, had the general command.

Conferences were held by Wayne with sergeants delegated from each regiment. They appeared to be satisfied with the mode and promises of redress held out to them; but the main body of the mutineers persisted in revolt,

and proceeded on the next day to Princeton. Wayne hoped they might continue further on, and would gladly have seen them across the Delaware, beyond the influence of the enemy; but their leaders clung to Princeton, lest in further movements they might not be able to keep their followers together. Their proceedings continued to be orderly; military forms were still observed; they obeyed their leaders, behaved well to the people of the country, and committed no excesses.

General Wayne and Colonels Butler and Stewart remained with them in an equivocal position; popular, but without authority, and almost in durance. The insurgents professed themselves still ready to march under them against the enemy, but would permit none other of their former officers to come among them. The Marquis de Lafayette, General St. Clair, and Colonel Laurens, the newly-appointed minister to France, arrived at the camp and were admitted; but afterwards were ordered away at a short notice.

The news of the revolt caused great consternation in Philadelphia. A committee of Congress set off to meet the insurgents, accompanied by Reed, the president of Pennsylvania, and one or two other officers, and escorted by a city troop of horse. The committee halted

at Trenton, whence President Reed wrote to Wayne requesting a personal interview at four o'clock in the afternoon, at four miles' distance from Princeton. Wayne was moreover told to inform the troops, that he (Reed) would be there to receive any propositions from them, and redress any injuries they might have sustained; but that after the indignities they had offered to the marquis and General St. Clair, he could not venture to put himself in their power.

Wayne, knowing that the letter was intended for his troops more than for himself, read it publicly on the parade. It had a good effect upon the sergeants and many of the men. The idea that the president of their State should have to leave the seat of government and stoop to treat with them, touched their sectional pride and their home feelings. They gathered round the horseman who had brought the letter, and inquired anxiously whether President Reed was unkindly disposed towards them; intimating privately their dislike to the business in which they were engaged.

Still, it was not thought prudent for President Reed to trust himself within their camp. Wayne promised to meet him on the following day (7th), though it seemed uncertain whether he was master of himself, or whether he was

not a kind of prisoner. Tidings had just been received of the movements of Sir Henry Clinton, and of tempting overtures he intended to make, and it was feared the men might listen to them. Three of the light horse were sent in the direction of Amboy to keep a lookout for any landing of the enemy.

At this critical juncture, two of Sir Henry's emissaries arrived in the camp, and delivered to the leaders of the malcontents a paper containing his seductive proposals and promises. The mutineers, though openly arrayed in arms against their government, spurned at the idea of turning "Arnolds," as they termed it. The emissaries were seized and conducted to General Wayne, who placed them in confinement, promising that they should be liberated, should the pending negotiation fail.

This incident had a great effect in inspiring hope of the ultimate loyalty of the troops; and the favorable representations of the temper of the men, made by General Wayne in a personal interview, determined President Reed to venture among them. The consequences of their desertion to the enemy were too alarming to be risked. "I have but one life to lose," said he, "and my country has the first claim to it." *

* Letter to the Executive Council.

As he approached Princeton with his suite, he found guards regularly posted, who turned out and saluted him in military style. The whole line was drawn out under arms near the college, and the artillery on the point of firing a salute. He prevented it, lest it should alarm the country. It was a hard task for him to ride along the line as if reviewing troops regularly organized; but the crisis required some sacrifice of the kind. The sergeants were all in the places of their respective officers, and saluted the president as he passed; never were mutineers more orderly and decorous.

The propositions now offered to the troops were: To discharge all those who had enlisted indefinitely for three years or during the war; the fact to be inquired into by three commissioners appointed by the executive—where the original enlistment could not be produced in evidence, the oath of the soldier to suffice.

To give immediate certificates for the deficit in their pay caused by the depreciation of the currency, and the arrearages to be settled as soon as circumstances would permit.

To furnish them immediately with certain specified articles of clothing which were most wanted.

These propositions proving satisfactory, the

troops set out for Trenton, where the negotiation was concluded.

Most of the artillerists and many of the infantry obtained their discharges; some on their oaths, others on account of the vague terms under which they had been enlisted; forty days' furlough was given to the rest, and thus, for a time, the whole insurgent force was dissolved.

The two spies who had tampered with the fidelity of the troops, were tried by a court-martial, found guilty, and hanged at the cross-roads near Trenton. A reward of fifty guineas each was offered to two sergeants who had arrested and delivered them up. They declined accepting it, saying they had merely acted by order of the board of sergeants. The hundred guineas were then offered to the board. Their reply is worthy of record. "It was not," said they, "for the sake or through any expectation of reward, but for the love of our country, that we sent the spies immediately to General Wayne; we therefore do not consider ourselves entitled to any other reward but the love of our country, and do jointly agree to accept of no other."

The accommodation entered into with the mutineers of the Pennsylvania line appeared to Washington of doubtful policy, and likely

to have a pernicious effect on the whole army. His apprehensions were soon justified by events. On the night of the 20th of January, a part of the Jersey troops, stationed at Pompton, rose in arms claiming the same terms just yielded to the Pennsylvanians. For a time it was feared the revolt would spread throughout the line.

Sir Henry Clinton was again on the alert. Troops were sent to Staten Island to be ready to cross into the Jerseys, and an emissary was despatched to tempt the mutineers with seductive offers.

In this instance Washington adopted a more rigorous course than in the other. The present insurgents were not so formidable in point of numbers as the Pennsylvanians; the greater part of them, also, were foreigners, for whom he felt less sympathy than for native troops. He was convinced, too, of the fidelity of the troops under his immediate command, who were from the Eastern States. A detachment from the Massachusetts line was sent under Major-General Howe, who was instructed to compel the mutineers to unconditional submission; to grant them no terms while in arms, or in a state of resistance; and on their surrender, instantly to execute a few of the most active and incendiary leaders. "You

will also try," added he, "to avail yourself of the services of the militia, representing to them how dangerous to civil liberty is the precedent of armed soldiers dictating to their country."

His orders were punctually obeyed, and were crowned with complete success. Howe had the good fortune, after a tedious night march, to surprise the mutineers napping in their huts just at daybreak. Five minutes only were allowed them to parade without their arms and give up the ringleaders. This was instantly complied with, and two of them were executed on the spot. Thus the mutiny was quelled, the officers resumed their command, and all things were restored to order.*

Thus terminated an insurrection, which, for a time, had spread alarm among the friends of American liberty, and excited the highest hopes of its foes. The circumstances connected with it had ultimately a beneficial effect in strengthening the confidence of those friends, by proving that, however the Americans might quarrel with their own government, nothing could again rally them under the royal standard.

A great cause of satisfaction to Washington

* *Memoir of Major Shaw*, by Hon. Josiah Quincy, p. 89.

was the ratification of the articles of confederation between the States, which took place not long after this agitating juncture. A set of articles had been submitted to Congress by Dr. Franklin, as far back as 1775. A form had been prepared and digested by a committee in 1776, and agreed upon, with some modifications, in 1777, but had ever since remained in abeyance, in consequence of objections made by individual States. The confederation was now complete, and Washington, in a letter to the president of Congress, congratulated him and the body over which he presided, on an event long wished for, and which he hoped would have the happiest effects upon the politics of this country, and be of essential service to our cause in Europe.

It was, after all, an instrument far less efficacious than its advocates had anticipated; but it served an important purpose in binding the States together as a nation, and keeping them from falling asunder into individual powers, after the pressure of external danger should cease to operate.

Chapter X.

Expedition of Arnold into Virginia—Buccaneering Ravages—Checked by Steuben — Arnold at Portsmouth—Congress Resolves to Form Heads of Departments — Hamilton Suggested by Sullivan for Department of Finance — High Opinion of him Expressed by Washington—Misunderstanding between Hamilton and the Commander-in-Chief.

THE armament with which Arnold boasted he was "to shake the continent," met with that boisterous weather which often rages along our coast in the winter. His ships were tempest-tost and scattered, and half of his cavalry horses and several of his guns had to be thrown overboard. It was the close of the year when he anchored in the Chesapeake.

Virginia, at the time, was almost in a defenseless state. Baron Steuben, who had the general command there, had recently detached such of his regular troops as were clothed and

equipped, to the south, to reinforce General Greene. The remainder, five or six hundred in number, deficient in clothing, blankets, and tents, were scarcely fit to take the field, and the volunteers and militia lately encamped before Portsmouth, had been disbanded. Governor Jefferson, on hearing of the arrival of the fleet, called out the militia from the neighboring counties; but few could be collected on the spur of the moment, for the whole country was terror-stricken and in confusion. Having land and sea forces at his command, Arnold opened the new year with a buccaneering ravage. Ascending James River with some small vessels which he had captured, he landed on the 4th of January with nine hundred men at Westover, about twenty-five miles below Richmond, and pushed for the latter place, at that time little more than a village, though the metropolis of Virginia. Halting for the night within twelve miles of it, he advanced on the following day with as much military parade as possible, so as to strike terror into a militia patrol, which fled back to Richmond, reporting that a British force, fifteen hundred strong, was at hand.

It was Arnold's hope to capture the governor; but the latter, after providing for the security of as much as possible of the public

stores, had left Richmond the evening before on horseback to join his family at Tuckahoe, whence, on the following day, he conveyed them to a place of safety. Governor Jefferson got back by noon to Manchester, on the opposite side of James River, in time to see Arnold's marauders march into the town. Many of the inhabitants had fled to the country; some stood terrified spectators on the hills, not more than two hundred men were in arms for the defense of the place; these, after firing a few volleys, retreated to Richmond and Shockoe Hills, whence they were driven by the cavalry, and Arnold had possession of the capital. He sent some of the citizens to the governor, offering to spare the town, provided his ships might come up James River to be laden with tobacco from the warehouses. His offer was indignantly rejected, whereupon fire was set to the public edifices, stores, and workshops; private houses were pillaged, and a great quantity of tobacco consumed.

While this was going on, Colonel Simcoe had been detached to Westham, six miles up the river, where he destroyed a cannon foundry and sacked a public magazine; broke off the trunnions of the cannon, and threw into the river the powder which he could not carry away, and, after effecting a complete devasta-

tion, rejoined Arnold at Richmond, which during the ensuing night resounded with the drunken orgies of the soldiery.

Having completed his ravage at Richmond, Arnold re-embarked at Westover and fell slowly down the river, landing occasionally to burn, plunder, and destroy; pursued by Steuben with a few continental troops and all the militia that he could muster. General Nelson, also, with similar levies opposed him. Lower down the river some skirmishing took place, a few of Arnold's troops were killed and a number wounded, but he made his way to Portsmouth, opposite Norfolk, where he took post on the 20th of January, and proceeded to fortify.

Steuben would have attempted to drive him from this position, but his means were totally inadequate. Collecting from various parts of the country all the force that could be mustered, he so disposed it at different points as to hem the traitor in, prevent his making further incursions, and drive him back to his intrenchments should he attempt any.

Governor Jefferson returned to Richmond after the enemy had left it, and wrote thence to the commander-in-chief an account of this ravaging incursion of "the parricide Arnold." It was mortifying to Washington to see so in-

considerable a party committing such extensive depredations with impunity, but it was his opinion that their principal object was to make a diversion in favor of Cornwallis; and as the evils to be apprehended from Arnold's predatory incursions were not to be compared with the injury to the common cause and the danger to Virginia in particular, which would result from the conquest of the States to the southward, he adjured Jefferson not to permit attention to immediate safety so to engross his thoughts as to divert him from measures for reinforcing the Southern army.

About this time an important resolution was adopted in Congress. Washington had repeatedly, in his communications to that body attributed much of the distresses and disasters of the war to the congressional mode of conducting business through committees and "boards," thus causing irregularity and delay, preventing secrecy and augmenting expense. He was greatly rejoiced, therefore, when Congress decided to appoint heads of departments; secretaries of foreign affairs, of war, and of marine, and a superintendent of finance. "I am happy, thrice happy, on private as well as public account," writes he, "to find that these are in train. For it will ease my shoulders of an immense burthen, which the deranged and

perplexed situation of our affairs, and the distresses of every department of the army, had placed upon them."

General Sullivan, to whom this was written and who was in Congress, was a warm friend of Washington's aide-de-camp, Colonel Hamilton, and he sounded the commander-in-chief as to the qualifications of the colonel to take charge of the department of finance. "I am unable to answer," replied Washington, "because I never entered upon a discussion with him, but this I can venture to advance, from a thorough knowledge of him, that there are few men to be found of his age, who have more general knowledge than he possesses; and none whose soul is more firmly engaged in the cause, or who exceeds him in probity and sterling virtue."

This was a warm eulogium for one of Washinton's circumspect character, but it was sincere. Hamilton had been four years in his military family, and always treated by him with marked attention and regard. Indeed, it had surprised many to see so young a man admitted like a veteran into his counsels. It was but a few days after Washington had penned the eulogium just quoted, when a scene took place between him and the man he had praised so liberally, that caused him deep chagrin. We

give it as related by Hamilton himself, in a letter to General Schuyler, one of whose daughters he had recently married.

"An unexpected change has taken place in my situation," writes Hamilton (February 18th). "I am no longer a member of the general's family. This information will surprise you, and the manner of the change will surprise you more. Two days ago the general and I passed each other on the stairs: he told me he wanted to speak to me. I answered that I would wait on him immediately. I went below and delivered Mr. Tilghman a letter to be sent to the commissary, containing an order of a pressing and interesting nature.

"Returning to the general, I was stopped on the way by the Marquis de Lafayette, and we conversed together about a minute on a matter of business. He can testify how impatient I was to get back, and that I left him in a manner which, but for our intimacy, would have been more than abrupt. Instead of finding the general, as is usual, in his room, I met him at the head of the stairs, where, accosting me in an angry tone, 'Colonel Hamilton, (said he), you have kept me waiting at the head of the stairs these ten minutes;—I must tell you, sir, you treat me with disrespect.' I replied, without petulancy, but with decision, 'I am

not conscious of it, sir; but since you have thought it necessary to tell me so, we part.' 'Very well, sir, (said he) if it be your choice,' or something to this effect, and we separated. I sincerely believe my absence which gave so much umbrage, did not last two minutes.

"In less than an hour after, Tilghman came to me in the general's name, assuring me of his great confidence in my abilities, integrity, usefulness, etc., and of his desire, in a candid conversation, to heal a difference which could not have happened but in a moment of passion. I requested Mr. Tilghman to tell him,—1st. That I had taken my resolution in a manner not to be revoked. 2d. That a conversation could serve no other purpose than to produce explanations, mutually disagreeable, though I certainly would not refuse an interview, if he desired it, yet I would be happy, if he would permit me to decline it. 3d. That though determined to leave the family, the same principles which had kept me so long in it, would continue to direct my conduct towards him when out of it. 4th. That, however, I did not wish to distress him, or the public business, by quitting him before he could derive other assistance by the return of some of the gentleman who were absent. 5th. And that, in the meantime, it depended on him to let our be-

havior to each other be the same as if nothing had happened. He consented to decline the conversation, and thanked me for my offer of continuing my aid in the manner I had mentioned.

"I have given you so particular a detail of our difference, from the desire I have to justify myself in your opinion. Perhaps you may think I was precipitate in rejecting the overture made by the general to an accommodation. I assure you, my dear sir, it was not the effect of resentment; it was the deliberate result of maxims I had long formed for the government of my own conduct."

In considering this occurrence, as stated by Hamilton himself, we think he was in the wrong. His hurrying past the general on the stairs without pausing, although the latter expressed a wish to speak with him; his giving no reason for his haste, which, however "pressing" the letter he had to deliver, he could have spared at least a moment to do; his tarrying below to talk with the Marquis de Lafayette, the general all this time remaining at the head of the stairs, had certainly an air of great disrespect, and we do not wonder that the commander-in-chief was deeply offended at being so treated by his youthful aide-de-camp. His expression of displeasure

was measured and dignified, however irritated he may have been, and such an explanation, at least, was due to him, as Hamilton subsequently rendered to General Schuyler, through a desire to justify himself in that gentleman's opinion. The reply of Hamilton, on the contrary, savored very much of petulance, however devoid he may have considered it of that quality, and his avowed determination "to part," simply because taxed by the general with want of respect, was singularly curt and abrupt.

Washington's subsequent overture, intended to soothe the wounded sensitiveness of Hamilton and soften the recent rebuke, by assurances of unaltered confidence and esteem, strikes us as in the highest degree noble and gracious, and furnishes another instance of that magnanimity which governed his whole conduct. We trust that General Schuyler, in reply to Hamilton's appeal, intimated that he had indeed been precipitate in rejecting such an overture.

The following passage in Hamilton's letter to Schuyler, gives the real key to his conduct on this occasion:

"I always disliked the office of an aide-de-camp, as having in it a kind of personal dependence. I refused to serve in this capacity with

two major-generals, at an early period of the war. Infected, however, with the enthusiasm of the times, an idea of the general's character overcame my scruples, and induced me to accept his invitation to enter into his family. . . . It has been often with great difficulty that I have prevailed on myself not to renounce it; but while, from motives of public utility, I was doing violence to my feelings, I was always determined, if there should ever happen a breach between us, never to consent to an accommodation. I was persuaded that when once that nice barrier which marked the boundaries of what we owed to each other should be thrown down, it might be propped again, but could never be restored."

Hamilton, in fact, had long been ambitious of an independent position, and of some opportunity, as he said, "to raise his character above mediocrity." When an expedition by Lafayette against Staten Island had been meditated in the autumn of 1780, he had applied to the commander-in-chief, through the marquis, for the command of a battalion, which was without a field officer. Washington had declined on the ground that giving him a whole battalion might be a subject of dissatisfaction, and that, should any accident happen to him in the actual state of affairs at headquarters,

the commander-in-chief would be embarrassed for want of his assistance.

He had next been desirous of the post of adjutant-general, which Colonel Alexander Scammel was about to resign, and was recommended for that office by Lafayette and Greene, but, before their recommendations reached Washington, he had already sent in to Congress the name of Brigadier-General Hand, who received the nomination.

These disappointments may have rendered Hamilton doubtful of his being properly appreciated by the commander-in-chief; impaired his devotion to him, and determined him, as he says, "if there should ever happen a breach between them, never to consent to an accommodation." It almost looks as if, in his high-strung and sensitive mood, he had been on the watch for an offense, and had grasped at the shadow of one.

Some short time after the rupture had taken place, Washington received a letter from Lafayette, then absent in Virginia, in which the marquis observes: "Considering the footing I am upon with your Excellency, it would, perhaps, appear strange to you, that I never mentioned a circumstance which lately happened in your family. I was the first who knew of it, and from that moment exerted every means

in my power to prevent a separation, which I knew was not agreeable to your Excellency. To this measure I was prompted by affection to you ; but I thought it was improper to mention anything about it, until you were pleased to impart it to me."

The following was Washington's reply: "The event, which you seem to speak of with regret, my friendship for you would most assuredly have induced me to impart to you the moment it happened, had it not been for the request of Hamilton, who desired that no mention should be made of it. Why this injunction on me, while he was communicating it himself, is a little extraordinary. But I complied, and religiously fulfilled it."

We are happy to add, that though a temporary coolness took place between the commander-in-chief and his late favorite aide-de-camp, it was but temporary. The friendship between these illustrious men was destined to survive the Revolution, and to signalize itself through many eventful years, and stands recorded in the correspondence of Washington almost at the last moment of his life. *

* His last letter to Hamilton, in which he assures him of "his very great esteem and regard," was written by Washington but two days before his death. —Sparks, xi., 469.

Chapter XI.

Cornwallis Prepares to Invade North Carolina—Tarleton Sent against Morgan — Battle at Cowpens—Morgan Pushes for the Catawba with Spoils and Prisoners—Cornwallis Endeavors to Intercept him—The Rising of the River—Cornwallis at Ramsour's Mills.

THE stress of war, as Washington apprehended, was at present shifted to the South. In a former chapter, we left General Greene, in the latter part of December, posted with one division of his army on the east side of the Pedee River in North Carolina, having detached General Morgan with the other division, one thousand strong, to take post near the confluence of the Pacolet and Broad rivers in South Carolina.

Cornwallis lay encamped about seventy miles to the southwest of Greene, at Winnsborough in Fairfield district. General Leslie had recently arrived at Charleston from Virginia, and

was advancing to reinforce him with fifteen hundred men. This would give Cornwallis such a superiority of force, that he prepared for a second invasion of North Carolina. His plan was to leave Lord Rawdon at the central post of Camden with a considerable body of troops to keep all quiet, while his lordship, by rapid marches, would throw himself between Greene and Virginia, cut him off from all reinforcements in that quarter, and oblige him either to make battle with his present force, or retreat precipitately from North Carolina, which would be disgraceful.* In either case Cornwallis counted on a general rising of the royalists, a re-establishment of regal government in the Carolinas, and the clearing away of all impediments to further triumphs in Virginia and Maryland.

By recent information, he learnt that Morgan had passed both the Catawba and Broad rivers, and was about seventy miles to the northwest, of him, on his way to the district of Ninety-Six. As he might prove extremely formidable if left in his rear, Tarleton was sent in quest of him, with about three hundred and fifty of his famous cavalry, a corps of legion and light infantry, and a number of the royal artillery with two field-pieces; about eleven hundred

* Cornwallis to Lord George Germain, March 17.

choice troops in all. His instructions were to pass Broad River for the protection of Ninety-Six, and either to strike at Morgan and push him to the utmost; or to drive him out of the country, so as to prevent his giving any trouble on that side.

Cornwallis moved with his main force on the 12th of December, in a northwest direction between the Broad River and the Catawba, leading toward the back country. This was for the purpose of crossing the great rivers at their fords near their sources; for they are fed by innumerable petty streams which drain the mountains, and are apt, in the winter time, when storms of rain prevail, to swell and become impassable below their forks. He took this route also, to cut off Morgan's retreat, or prevent his junction with Greene, should Tarleton's expedition fail of its object. General Leslie, whose arrival was daily expected, was to move up along the eastern side of the Wateree and Catawba, keeping parallel with his lordship and joining him above. Everything on the part of Cornwallis was well planned, and seemed to promise him a successful campaign.

Tarleton, after several days' hard marching, came upon the traces of Morgan, who was posted on the north bank of the Pacolet, to

guard the passes of that river. He sent word to Cornwallis of his intention to force a passage across the river, and compel Morgan either to fight or retreat, and suggested that his lordship should proceed up the eastern bank of Broad River, so as to be at hand to co-operate. His lordship, in consequence, took up a position at Turkey Creek, on Broad River.

Morgan had been recruited by North Carolina and Georgia militia, so that his force was nearly equal in number to that of Tarleton, but, in point of cavalry and discipline, vastly inferior. Cornwallis, too, was on his left, and might get in his rear; checking his impulse, therefore, to dispute the passage of the Pacolet, he crossed that stream and retreated towards the upper fords of Broad River.

Tarleton reached the Pacolet on the evening of the 15th, but halted on observing some troops on the opposite bank. It was merely a party of observation which Morgan had left there, but he supposed that officer to be there in full force. After some manœuvring to deceive his adversary, he crossed the river before daylight at Easterwood shoals. There was no opposition. Still he proceeded warily, until he learnt that Morgan, instead of being in his neighborhood, was in full march toward Broad River. Tarleton now pressed on in pursuit.

At ten o'clock at night he reached an encampment which Morgan had abandoned a few hours previously, apparently in great haste, for the camp-fires were still smoking, and provisions had been left behind half cooked. Eager to come upon his enemy while in the confusion of a hurried flight, Tarleton allowed his exhausted troops but a brief repose, and, leaving his baggage under a guard, resumed his dogged march about two o'clock in the night; tramping forward through swamps and rugged broken grounds, round the western side of Thickety Mountain. A little before daylight of the 17th he captured two videttes, from whom he learnt, to his surprise, that Morgan, instead of a headlong retreat, had taken a night's repose, and was actually preparing to give him battle.

Morgan, in fact, had been urged by his officers to retreat across Broad River, which was near by, and make for the mountainous country; but, closely pressed as he was, he feared to be overtaken while fording the river, and while his troops were fatigued, and in confusion: besides, being now nearly equal in number to the enemy, military pride would not suffer him to avoid a combat.

The place where he came to halt, was known in the early grants by the name of Hannah's

Battle of Cowpens—Conflict between Colonels Washington and Tarleton.

Cowpens, being part of a grazing establishment of a man named Hannah. It was in an open wood, favorable to the action of cavalry. There were two eminences of unequal height, and separated from each other by an interval about eighty yards wide. To the first eminence, which was the highest, there was an easy ascent of about three hundred yards. On these heights Morgan had posted himself. His flanks were unprotected, and the Broad River, running parallel on his rear, about six miles distant, and winding round on the left, would cut off retreat, should the day prove unfortunate.

The ground, in the opinion of tacticians, was not well chosen; Morgan, a veteran bush-fighter, vindicated it in after times in his own characteristic way. "Had I crossed the river, one half of the militia would have abandoned me. Had a swamp been in view, they would have made for it. As to covering my wings, I knew the foe I had to deal with, and that there would be nothing but downright fighting. As to a retreat, I wished to cut off all hope of one. Should Tarleton surround me with his cavalry, it would keep my troops from breaking away, and make them depend upon their bayonets. When men are forced to fight, they will sell their lives dearly."

In arranging his troops for action, he drew out his infantry in two lines. The first was composed of the North and South Carolina militia, under Colonel Pickens, having an advanced corps of North Carolina and Georgia volunteer riflemen. This line, on which he had the least dependence, was charged to wait until the enemy were within dead shot; then to take good aim, fire two volleys, and fall back.

The second line, drawn up a moderate distance in the rear of the first, and near the brow of the main eminence, was composed of Colonel Howard's light infantry and the Virginia riflemen; all continental troops. They were informed of the orders which had been given to the first line, lest they should mistake their falling back for a retreat. Colonel Howard had the command of this line, on which the greatest reliance was placed.

About a hundred and fifty yards in the rear of the second line, and on the slope of the lesser eminence, was Colonel Washington's troop of cavalry, about eighty strong; with about fifty mounted Carolinian volunteers, under Major McCall, armed with sabres and pistols.

British writers of the day gave Morgan credit for uncommon ability and judgment in

the disposition of his force; placing the militia, in whom he had no great confidence, in full view on the edge of the wood, and keeping his best troops out of sight, but drawn up in excellent order and prepared for all events.*

It was about eight o'clock in the morning (January 17th), when Tarleton came up. The position of the Americans seemed to him to give great advantage to his cavalry, and he made hasty preparation for immediate attack, anticipating an easy victory. Part of his infantry he formed into a line, with dragoons on each flank. The rest of the infantry and cavalry were to be a reserve, and to wait for orders.

There was a physical difference in the condition of the adverse troops. The British were haggard from want of sleep and a rough night-tramp; the Americans, on the contrary, were fresh from a night's rest, invigorated by a morning's meal, and deliberately drawn up. Tarleton took no notice of these circumstances, or disregarded them. Impetuous at all times, and now confident of victory, he did not even wait until the reserve could be placed, but led on his first line, which rushed shouting to the attack. The North Carolina and Georgia

* *Annual Register*, 1781, p. 56.

riflemen in the advance, delivered their fire with effect, and fell back to the flanks of Pickens's militia. These, as they had been instructed, waited until the enemy were within fifty yards, and then made a destructive volley, but soon gave way before the push of the bayonet. The British infantry pushed up to the second line, while forty of their cavalry attacked it on the right, seeking to turn its flank. Colonel Howard made a brave stand, and for some time there was a bloody conflict; seeing himself, however, in danger of being outflanked, he endeavored to change his front to the right. His orders were misunderstood, and his troops were falling into confusion, when Morgan rode up and ordered them to retreat over the hill, where Colonel Washington's cavalry were hurried forward for their protection.

The British, seeing the troops retiring over the hill, rushed forward irregularly in pursuit of what they deemed a routed foe. To their astonishment, they were met by Colonel Washington's dragoons, who spurred on them impetuously, while Howard's infantry, facing about, gave them an effective volley of musketry, and then charged with the bayonet.

The enemy now fell into complete confusion. Some few artillerymen attempted to defend

their guns, but were cut down or taken prisoners, and the cannon and colors captured. A panic seized upon the British troops, aided no doubt by fatigue and exhaustion. A general flight took place. Tarleton endeavored to bring his legion cavalry into action to retrieve the day. They had stood aloof as a reserve, and now, infected by the panic, turned their backs upon their commander, and galloped off through the woods, riding over the flying infantry.

Fourteen of his officers, however, and forty of his dragoons, remained true to him; with these he attempted to withstand the attack of Washington's cavalry, and a fierce mêlée took place; but on the approach of Howard's infantry Tarleton gave up all for lost, and spurred off with his few but faithful adherents, trusting to the speed of their horses for safety. They made for Hamilton's Ford on Broad River, thence to seek the main army under Cornwallis.

The loss of the British in this action was ten officers and above one hundred men killed, two hundred wounded, and between five and six hundred rank and file made prisoners; while the Americans had but twelve men killed and sixty wounded. The disparity of loss shows how complete had been the confusion

and defeat of the enemy. "During the whole period of the war," says one of their own writers, "no other action reflected so much dishonor on the British arms." *

The spoils taken by Morgan, according to his own account, were two field-pieces, two standards, eight hundred muskets, one travelling forge, thirty-five wagons, seventy negroes, upwards of one hundred dragoon-horses, and all the music. The enemy, however, had destroyed most of their baggage, which was immense.

Morgan did not linger on the field of battle. Leaving Colonel Pickens with a body of militia under the protection of a flag, to bury the dead and provide for the wounded of both armies, he set out the same day about noon, with his prisoners and spoils. Lord Cornwallis, with his main force, was at Turkey Creek, only twenty-five miles distant, and must soon hear of the late battle. His object was to get to the Catawba before he could be intercepted by his lordship, who lay nearer than he did to the fords of the river. Before nightfall he crossed Broad River at the Cherokee Ford, and halted for a few hours on its northern bank. Before daylight of the 18th he was

*Stedman, ii., p. 324.

again on the march. Colonel Washington, who had been in pursuit of the enemy, rejoined him in the course of the day, as also did Colonel Pickens, who had left such of the wounded as could not be moved, under the protection of the flag of truce.

Still fearing that he might be intercepted before he could reach the Catawba, he put his prisoners in charge of Colonel Washington and the cavalry, with orders to move higher up into the country and cross the main Catawba at the Island Ford; while he himself pushed forward for that river by the direct route; thus to distract the attention of the enemy should they be in pursuit, and to secure his prisoners from being recaptured.

Cornwallis, on the eventful day of the 17th, was at his camp on Turkey Creek, confidently waiting for tidings from Tarleton of a new triumph, when, towards evening, some of his routed dragoons came straggling into camp, haggard and forlorn, to tell the tale of his defeat. It was a thunderstroke. Tarleton defeated! and by the rude soldier he had been so sure of entrapping! It seemed incredible. It was confirmed, however, the next morning, by the arrival of Tarleton himself, discomfited and crest-fallen. In his account of the recent battle, he represented the force under Morgan

to be two thousand. This exaggerated estimate, together with the idea that the militia would now be out in great force, rendered his lordship cautious. Supposing that Morgan, elated by his victory, would linger near the scene of his triumph, or advance toward Ninety-Six, Cornwallis remained a day or two at Turkey Creek to collect the scattered remains of Tarleton's forces, and to wait the arrival of General Leslie, whose march had been much retarded by the waters, but who "was at last out of the swamps."

On the 19th, having been rejoined by Leslie, his lordship moved towards King's Creek, and thence in the direction of King's Mountain, until informed of Morgan's retreat toward the Catawba. Cornwallis now altered his course in that direction, and, trusting that Morgan, encumbered, as he supposed him to be, by prisoners and spoils, might be overtaken before he could cross that river, detached a part of his force, without baggage, in pursuit of him, while he followed on with the remainder.

Nothing, say the British chroniclers, could exceed the exertions of the detachment; but Morgan succeeded in reaching the Catawba and crossing it in the evening, just two hours before those in pursuit of him arrived on its

banks. A heavy rain came on and fell all night, and by daybreak the river was so swollen as to be impassable.*

This sudden swelling of the river was considered by the Americans as something providential. It continued for several days, and gave Morgan time to send off his prisoners who had crossed several miles above, and to call out the militia of Mecklenburg and Rowan counties to guard the fords of the river.†

Lord Cornwallis had moved slowly with his main body. He was encumbered by an immense train of baggage; the roads were through deep red clay, and the country was cut up by streams and morasses. It was not until the 25th, that he assembled his whole force at Ramsour's Mills, on the Little Catawba, as the south fork of that river is called, and learnt that Morgan had crossed the main stream. Now he felt the loss he had sustained, in the

* Stedman, ii., 326. Cornwallis to Sir H. Clinton; see also *Remembrancer*, 1781, part i., 303.

† This sudden swelling of the river has been stated by some writers, as having taken place on the 29th, on the approach of Cornwallis's main force, whereas it took place on the 23d, on the approach of the *detachment* sent by his lordship in advance in pursuit of Morgan. The inaccuracy as to the date has given rise to disputes among historians.

late defeat of Tarleton, of a great part of his light troops, which are the life and spirit of an army, and especially efficient in a thinly-peopled country of swamps, and streams, and forests, like that he was entangled in.

In this crippled condition, he determined to relieve his army of everything that could impede rapid movement in his future operations. Two days, therefore, were spent by him at Ramsour's Mills, in destroying all such baggage and stores as could possibly be spared. He began with his own. His officers followed his example. Superfluities of all kinds were sacrificed without flinching. Casks of wine and spirituous liquors were staved: quantities even of provisions were sacrificed. No wagons were spared but those laden with hospital stores, salt and ammunition, and four empty ones for the sick and wounded. The alacrity with which these sacrifices of comforts, conveniences, and even necessaries, were made, was honorable to both officers and men.*

The whole expedient was subsequently sneered at by Sir Henry Clinton, as being "something too like a Tartar move"; but his lordship was preparing for a trial of speed, where it was important to carry as light weight as possible.

* *Annual Register*, 1781, p. 53.

Chapter XII.

Greene Joins Morgan on the Catawba—Adopts the Fabian Policy—Movement of Cornwallis to Cross the Catawba—Affair at McGowan's Ford—Militia Surprised by Tarleton at Tarrant's Tavern—Cornwallis Checked by the Rising of the Yadkin—Contest of Skill and Speed of the Two Armies in a March to the Banks of the Dan.

GENERAL GREENE was gladdened by a letter from Morgan, written shortly after his defeat of Tarleton, and transmitted the news to Washington with his own generous comments. "The victory was complete," writes he, "and the action glorious. The brilliancy and success with which it was fought, does the highest honor to the American arms, and adds splendor to the character of the general and his officers. I must beg leave to recommend them to your Excellency's notice, and doubt not but from your representation, Congress will receive

pleasure from testifying their approbation of their conduct."

Another letter from Morgan, written on the 25th, spoke of the approach of Cornwallis and his forces. "My numbers," writes he, "are at this time too weak to fight them. I intend to move towards Salisbury, to get near the main army. I think it would be advisable to join our forces and fight them before they join Phillips, which they certainly will do if they are not stopped."

Greene had recently received intelligence of the landing of troops at Wilmington, from a British squadron, supposed to be a force under Arnold, destined to push up Cape Fear River, and co-operate with Cornwallis; he had to prepare, therefore, not only to succor Morgan, but to prevent this co-operation. He accordingly detached General Stevens with his Virginia militia (whose term of service was nearly expired) to take charge of Morgan's prisoners, and conduct them to Charlottesville in Virginia. At the same time he wrote to the governors of North Carolinia and Virginia, for all the aid they could furnish; to Steuben, to hasten forward his recruits, and to Shelby, Campbell, and others, to take arms once more, and rival their achievements at King's Mountain.

This done, he left General Huger in com-

mand of the division on the Pedee, with orders to hasten on by forced marches to Salisbury, to join the other division: in the meantime he set off on horseback for Morgan's camp, attended merely by a guide, an aide-de-camp, and a sergeant's guard of dragoons. His object was to aid Morgan in assembling militia and checking the enemy until the junction of his forces could be effected. It was a hard ride of upwards of a hundred miles through a rough country. On the last day of January he reached Morgan's camp at Sherrard's Ford, on the east side of the Catawba. The British army lay on the opposite side of the river, but a few miles distant from it, and appeared to be making preparations to force a passage across, as it was subsiding, and would soon be fordable. Greene supposed Cornwallis had in view a junction with Arnold at Cape Fear; he wrote, therefore, to General Huger to hurry on, so that with their united forces they could give his lordship a defeat before he could effect the junction. "*I am not without hopes,*" writes he, "*of ruining Lord Cornwallis if he persists in his mad scheme of pushing through the country;* and it is my earnest desire to form a junction as early for this purpose as possible. Desire Colonel Lee to force a march to join us. *Here is a fine field, and great glory ahead.*"

More correct information relieved him from the apprehension of a co-operation of Arnold and Cornwallis. The British troops which landed at Wilmington, were merely a small detachment sent from Charleston to establish a military depot for the use of Cornwallis in his Southern campaign. They had taken possession of Wilmington without opposition.

Greene now changed his plans. He was aware of the ill-provided state of the British army, from the voluntary destruction of their wagons, tents, and baggage. Indeed, when he first heard of this measure, on his arriving at Sherrard's Ford, he had exclaimed, "Then Cornwallis is ours." His plan now was to tempt the enemy continually with the prospect of a battle, but continually to elude one; to harass them by a long pursuit, draw them higher into the country, and gain time for the division advancing under Huger to join him. It was the Fabian policy that he had learnt under Washington, of whom he prided himself on being a disciple.

As the subsiding of the Catawba would enable Cornwallis to cross, Greene ordered Morgan to move off silently with his division, on the evening of the 31st, and to press his march all night, so as to gain a good start in advance, while he (Greene) would remain to bring on

the militia, who were employed to check the enemy. These militia, assembled from the neighboring counties, did not exceed five hundred. Two hundred of them were distributed at different fords; the remaining three hundred, forming a corps of mounted riflemen under General Davidson, were to watch the movements of the enemy, and attack him wherever he should make his main attempt to cross. When the enemy should have actually crossed, the different bodies of militia were to make the best of their way to a rendezvous, sixteen miles distant, on the road to Salisbury, where Greene would be waiting to receive them, and conduct their further movements.

While these dispositions were being made by the American commander, Cornwallis was preparing to cross the river. The night of the 31st was chosen for the attempt. To divert the attention of the Americans, he detached Colonels Webster and Tarleton with a part of the army to a public ford called Beattie's Ford, where he supposed Davidson to be stationed. There they were to open a cannonade, and make a feint of forcing a passage. The main attempt, however, was to be made six miles lower down, at McGowan's, a private and unfrequented ford, where little, if any, opposition was anticipated.

Cornwallis set out for that ford, with the main body of his army, at one o'clock in the morning. The night was dark and rainy. He had to make his way through a wood and swamp where there was no road. His artillery stuck fast. The line passed on without them. It was near daybreak by the time the head of the column reached the ford. To their surprise, they beheld numerous camp fires on the opposite bank. Word was hastily carried to Cornwallis that the ford was guarded. It was so indeed: Davidson was there with his riflemen.

His lordship would have waited for his artillery, but the rain was still falling, and might render the river unfordable. At that place the Catawba was nearly five hundred yards wide, about three feet deep, very rapid, and full of large stones. The troops entered the river in platoons, to support each other against the current, and were ordered not to fire until they should gain the opposite bank. Colonel Hall, of the light infantry of the guards, led the way; the grenadiers followed. The noise of the water and the darkness covered their movements until they were nearly half-way across, when they were descried by an American sentinel. He challenged them three times, and receiving no answer, fired. Terrified by the

report, the man who was guiding the British turned and fled. Colonel Hall, thus abandoned, led the way directly across the river; whereas the true ford inclined diagonally farther down. Hall had to pass through deeper water, but he reached a part of the bank where it was ungarded. The American pickets, too, which had turned out at the alarm given by the sentinel, had to deliver a distant and slanting fire. Still it had its effect. Three of the British were killed, and thirty-six wounded. Colonel Hall pushed on gallantly, but was shot down as he ascended the bank. The horse on which Cornwallis rode was wounded, but the brave animal carried his lordship to the shore, where he sank under him. The steed of Brigadier-General O'Hara rolled over with him into the water, and General Leslie's horse was borne away by the tumultuous current and with difficulty recovered.

General Davidson hastened with his men towards the place where the British were landing. The latter formed as soon as they found themselves on firm ground, charged Davidson's men before he had time to get them in order, killed and wounded about forty, and put the rest to flight.

General Davidson was the last to leave the ground, and was killed just as he was mounting his horse. When the enemy had effected

the passage, Tarleton was detached with his cavalry in pursuit of the militia, most of whom dispersed to their homes. Eager to avenge his late disgrace, he scoured the country, and made for Tarrant's tavern, about ten miles distant, where about a hundred of them had assembled from different fords, on their way to the rendezvous, and were refreshing themselves. As Tarleton came clattering upon them with his legion, they ran to their horses, delivered a hasty fire, which emptied some of his saddles, and then made for the woods; a few of the worst mounted were overtaken and slain. Tarleton, in his account of his campaigns, made the number nearly fifty; but the report of a British officer, who rode over the ground shortly afterwards, reduced it to ten. The truth probably lay between. The survivors were dispersed beyond rallying. Tarleton, satisfied with his achievement, rejoined the main body. Had he scoured the country a few miles farther, General Greene and his suite might have fallen into his hands.

The general, informed that the enemy had crossed the Catawba at daybreak, awaited anxiously at the rendezvous the arrival of the militia. It was not until after midnight that he heard of their utter dispersion, and of the death of Davidson. Apprehending the rapid

advance of Cornwallis, he hastened to rejoin Morgan, who with his division was pushing forward for the Yadkin, first sending orders to General Huger to conduct the other division by the most direct route to Guilford Court-house, where the forces were to be united. Greene spurred forward through heavy rain and deep miry roads. It was a dreary ride and a lonely one, for he had detached his aides-de-camp in different directions, to collect the scattered militia. At mid-day he alighted, weary and travel-stained, at the inn at Salisbury, where the army physician who had charge of the sick and wounded prisoners received him at the door, and inquired after his well-being. "Fatigued, hungry, alone, and penniless," was Greene's heavy-hearted reply. The landlady, Mrs. Elizabeth Steele, overheard his desponding words. While he was seated at table, she entered the room, closed the door, and drawing from under her apron two bags of money, which she had carefully hoarded in those precarious times, "Take these," said the noble-hearted woman; "you will want them, and I can do without them." This is one of the numberless instances of the devoted patriotism of our women during the Revolution. Their patriotism was apt to be purer and more disinterested than that of the men.

Cornwallis did not advance so rapidly as had been apprehended. After crossing the Catawba, he had to wait for his wagons and artillery, which had remained on the other side in the woods; so that by nightfall of the 1st of February he was not more than five miles on the road to Salisbury. Eager to come up with the Americans, he mounted some of the infantry upon the baggage horses, joined them to the cavalry, and sent the whole forward under General O'Hara. They arrived on the banks of the Yadkin at night, between the 2d and 3d of February, just in time to capture a few wagons lingering in the rear of the American army, which had passed. The riflemen who guarded them retreated after a short skirmish. There were no boats with which to cross; the Americans had secured them on the other side. The rain which had fallen throughout the day had overflooded the ford by which the American cavalry had passed. The pursuers were again brought to a stand. After some doubt and delay, Cornwallis took his course up the south side of the Yadkin, and crossed by what is still called the Shallow Ford, while Greene continued on unmolested to Guilford Court-house, where he was joined by General Huger and his division on the 9th.

Cornwallis was now encamped about twenty-

five miles above them, at the old Moravian town of Salem. Greene summoned a council of war (almost the only time he was known to do so), and submitted the question whether or not to offer battle. There was a unanimous vote in the negative. A fourth part of the force was on the sick list, from nakedness and exposure. The official returns gave but two thousand and thirty-six, rank and file, fit for duty. Of these upwards of six hundred were militia.

Cornwallis had from twenty-five hundred to three thousand men, including three hundred cavalry, all thoroughly disciplined and well equipped. It was determined to continue the retreat.

The great object of Greene now was to get across the river Dan and throw himself into Virginia. With the reinforcements and assistance he might there expect to find, he hoped to effect the salvation of the South, and prevent the dismemberment of the Union. The object of Cornwallis was to get between him and Virginia, force him to a combat before he could receive those reinforcements, or enclose him in between the great rivers on the west, the sea on the east, and the two divisions of the British army under himself and Lord Rawdon on the north and south. His lord-

ship had been informed that the lower part of the Dan, at present, could only be crossed in boats, and that the country could not afford a sufficient number for the passage of Greene's army; he trusted, therefore, to cut him off from the upper part of the river, where alone it was fordable. Greene, however, had provided against such a contingency. Boats had been secured at various places by his agents, and could be collected at a few hours' notice at the lower ferries. Instead, therefore, of striving with his lordship for the upper fords, Greene shaped his course for Boyd's and Irwin's fords, just above the confluence of the Dan and Staunton rivers which forms the Roanoke, and about seventy miles from Guilford Court-house. This would give him twenty-five miles advantage of Lord Cornwallis at the outset. General Kosciuszko was sent with a party in advance to collect the boats and throw up breastworks at the ferries.

In ordering his march, General Greene took the lead with the main body, the baggage, and stores. General Morgan would have had the command of the rear-guard, composed of seven hundred of the most alert and active troops, cavalry and light infantry; but, being disabled by a violent attack of ague and rheumatism, it was given to Colonel Otho H. Williams

(formerly adjutant-general), who had with him Colonels Howard, Washington, and Lee.

This corps, detached some distance in the rear, did infinite service. Being lightly equipped, it could manœuvre in front of the British line of march, break down bridges, sweep off provisions, and impede its progress in a variety of ways, while the main body moved forward unmolested. It was now that Cornwallis most felt the severity of the blow he had received at the battle of the Cowpens in the loss of his light troops, having so few to cope with the élite corps under Williams.

Great abilities were shown by the commanders on either side in this momentous trial of activity and skill. It was a long and severe march for both armies, through a wild and rough country, thinly peopled, cut up by streams, partly covered by forests, along deep and frozen roads, under drenching rains, without tents at night, and with scanty supplies of provisions. The British suffered the least, for they were well equipped and comfortably clad; whereas the poor Americans were badly off for clothing, and many of them without shoes. The patriot armies of the Revolution, however, were accustomed in their winter marches to leave evidences of their hardships in bloody footprints.

We forbear to enter into the details of this

masterly retreat, the many stratagems and manœuvres of the covering party to delay and hoodwink the enemy. Tarleton himself bears witness in his narrative, that every measure of the Americans was judiciously designed and vigorously executed. So much had Cornwallis been misinformed at the outset as to the means below of passing the river, and so difficult was it, from want of light troops, to gain information while on the march, that he pushed on in the firm conviction that he was driving the American army into a trap and would give it a signal blow before it could cross the Dan.

In the meantime, Greene, with the main body, reached the banks of the river, and succeeded in crossing over with ease in the course of a single day, at Boyd's and Irwin's ferries, sending back word to Williams, who with his covering party was far in the rear. That intelligent officer encamped, as usual, in the evening, at a wary distance in front of the enemy, but stole a march upon them after dark, leaving his camp fires burning. He pushed on all night, arrived at the ferry in the morning of the 15th, having marched forty miles within the last four and twenty hours; and made such despatch in crossing, that his last troops had landed on the Virginia shore by the time the astonished enemy arrived on

the opposite bank. Nothing, according to their own avowal, could surpass the grief and vexation of the British at discovering, on their arrival at Boyd's Ferry, "that all their toils and exertions had been vain, and that all their hopes were frustrated." *

* *Annual Register*, 1781.

Chapter XIII.

Cornwallis Takes Post at Hillsborough—His Proclamation—Greene Recrosses the Dan—Country Scoured by Lee and Pickens—Affair with Colonel Pyle—Manœuvres of Cornwallis to Bring Greene to Action—Battle of Guilford Court-House—Greene Retreats to Troublesome Creek—Cornwallis Marches toward Cape Fear—Greene Pursues Him—Is Brought to a Stand at Deep River—Determines to Face about and Carry the War into South Carolina—Cornwallis Marches for Virginia.

FOR a day the two armies lay panting within sight of each other on the opposite banks of the river, which had put an end to the race. In a letter to Thomas Jefferson, dated the day of the crossing, Greene writes: "On the Dan River, almost fatigued to death, having had a retreat to conduct of upwards of two hundred miles, manœuvring constantly in the face of the enemy to give time for the militia to turn out and get off our stores." And to Washington he writes

(Feb. 15), "Lord Cornwallis has been at our heels from day to day ever since we left Guilford, and our movements from thence to this place have been of the most critical kind, having a river in our front and the enemy in our rear. The miserable condition of the troops for clothing has rendered the march the most painful imaginable, many hundred of the soldiers tracking the ground with their bloody feet. Your feelings for the sufferings of the soldier, had you been with us, would have been severely tried." He concludes by an honorable testimonial in their favor: "Our army are in good spirits, notwithstanding their sufferings and excessive fatigue."

On the 16th, the river began to subside: the enemy might soon be able to cross. Greene prepared for a further retreat by sending forward his baggage on the road to Halifax, and securing the passage of the Staunton. At Halifax he was resolved to make a stand, rather than suffer the enemy to take possession of it without a struggle. Its situation on the Roanoke would make it a strong position for their army, supported by a fleet, and would favor their designs both on Virginia and the Carolinas. With a view to its defense, intrenchments had already been thrown up, under the direction of Kosciuszko.

Lord Cornwallis, however, did not deem it prudent, under present circumstances, to venture into Virginia, where Greene would be sure of powerful reinforcements. North Carolina was in a state of the utmost disorder and confusion; he thought it better to remain in it for a time, and profit by having compelled Greene to abandon it. After giving his troops a day's repose, therefore, he put them once more in motion on the 18th, along the road by which he had pursued Greene. The latter, who was incessantly on the alert, was informed of this retrograde move, by a preconcerted signal; the waving of a white handkerchief, under covert of the opposite bank, by a female patriot.

This changed the game. Lee, with his legion, strengthened by two veteran Maryland companies, and Pickens, with a corps of South Carolina militia, all light troops, were transported across the Dan in the boats, with orders to gain the front of Cornwallis, hover as near as safety would permit, cut off his intercourse with the disaffected parts of the country, and check the rising of the royalists. "If we can but delay him for a day or two," said Greene, "he must be ruined." Greene, in the meanwhile, remained with his main force on the northern bank of the Dan, waiting to ascertain

his lordship's real designs, and ready to cross at a moment's warning.

The movements of Cornwallis, for a day or two, were of a dubious nature, designed to perplex his opponents; on the 20th, however, he took post at Hillsborough. Here he erected the royal standard, and issued a proclamation, stating that, whereas it had pleased Divine Providence to prosper the operations of His Majesty's arms in driving the rebel army out of the province, he invited all his loyal subjects to hasten to this standard with their arms and ten days' provisions, to assist in suppressing the remains of rebellion, and re-establishing good order and constitutional government.

By another instrument, all who could raise independent companies were called upon to give in their names at headquarters, and a bounty in money and lands was promised to those who should enlist under them. The companies thus raised were to be formed into regiments.

These sounding appeals produced but little effect on the people of the surrounding districts. Many hundreds, says Tarleton, rode into the camp to talk over the proclamation, inquire the news of the day, and take a view of the king's troops. The generality seemed desirous of peace, but averse from any exertion to procure

it. They acknowledged that the Continentals had been chased out of the province, but apprehended they would soon return. "Some of the most zealous," adds he, "promised to raise companies, and even regiments; but their followers and dependents were slow to enlist." Tarleton himself was forthwith detached with the cavalry and a small body of infantry, to a region of country lying between the Haw and the Deep rivers, to bring on a considerable number of loyalists who were said to be assembling there.

Rumor, in the meantime, had magnified the effect of his lordship's proclamations. Word was brought to Greene, that the tories were flocking from all quarters to the royal standard. Seven companies, it was said, had been raised in a single day. At this time the reinforcements to the American camp had been little more than six hundred Virginia militia, under General Stevens. Greene saw that at this rate, if Cornwallis were allowed to remain undisturbed, he would soon have complete command of North Carolina; he boldly determined, therefore, to recross the Dan at all hazards with the scanty force at his command, and give his lordship check. In this spirit he broke up his camp and crossed the river on the 23d.

In the meantime, Lee and Pickens, who were scouting the country about Hillsborough, received information of Tarleton's recruiting expedition to the region between the Haw and Deep Rivers. There was no foe they were more eager to cope with; and they resolved to give him a surprise. Having forded the Haw one day about noon, they learnt from a countryman that Tarleton was encamped about three miles off, that his horses were unsaddled, and that everything indicated confident security. They now pushed on under covert of the woods, prepared to give the bold partisan a blow after his own fashion. Before they reached the place Tarleton had marched on; they captured two of his staff, however, who had remained behind, settling with the people of a farm-house for supplies furnished to the detachment.

Being informed that Tarleton was to halt for the night at the distance of six miles, they still trusted to surprise him. On the way, however, they had an encounter with a body of three or four hundred mounted royalists, armed with rifles, and commanded by a Colonel Pyle, marching in quest of Tarleton. As Lee with his cavalry was in advance, he was mistaken for Tarleton, and hailed with loyal acclamations. He favored the mistake, and was taking measures to capture the royalists, when

some of them, seeing the infantry under Pickens, discovered their error and fired upon the rear-guard. The cavalry instantly charged upon them; ninety were cut down and slain, and a great number wounded; among the latter was Colonel Pyle himself, who took refuge among thickets on the borders of a piece of water which still bears his name. The Americans alleged in excuse for the slaughter, that it was provoked by their being attacked; and that the sabre was used, as a continued firing might alarm Tarleton's camp. We do not wonder, however, that British writers pronounced it a massacre; though it was but following the example set by Tarleton himself, in this ruthless campaign.

After all, Lee and Pickens missed the object of their enterprise. The approach of night and the fatigue of their troops, made them defer their attack upon Tarleton until morning. In the meantime, the latter had received an express from Cornwallis, informing him that Greene had passed the Dan, and ordering him to return to Hillsborough as soon as possible. He hastened to obey. Lee with his legion was in the saddle before daybreak; but Tarleton's troops were already on the march. "The legion," writes Lee, "accustomed to night expeditions, had been in the habit of using pine-

torch for flambeau. Supplied with this, though the morning was dark, the enemy's trail was distinctly discovered, whenever a divergency took place in his route."

Before sunrise, however, Tarleton had forded the Haw, and "Light-Horse Harry" gave over the pursuit, consoling himself that though he had not effected the chief object of his enterprise, a secondary one was completely executed, which would repress the tory spirit just beginning to burst forth. "Fortune," writes he in his magniloquent way, "Fortune, which sways so imperiously the affairs of war, demonstrated throughout the operation its supreme control.* Nothing was omitted on the part of the Americans, to give to the expedition the desired termination; but the very bright prospects which for a time presented themselves, were suddenly overcast;—the capricious goddess gave us Pyle and saved Tarleton."

The reappearance of Greene and his army in North Carolina, heralded by the scourings of Lee and Pickens, disconcerted the schemes of Lord Cornwallis. The recruiting service was interrupted. Many royalists who were on the way to his camp returned home. Forage and provisions became scarce in the neighborhood. He found himself, he said, "amongst timid

* Lee's *Memoirs of the War*, i., 319.

friends and adjoining to inveterate rebels." On the 26th, therefore, he abandoned Hillsborough, threw himself across the Haw, and encamped near Alamance Creek, one of its principal tributaries, in a country favorable to supplies and with a tory population. His position was commanding, at the point of concurrence of roads from Salisbury, Guilford, High Rockford, Cross Creek, and Hillsborough. It covered also the communication with Wilmington, where a depot of military stores, so important to his half-destitute army, had recently been established.

Greene, with his main army, took post about fifteen miles above him, on the heights between Troublesome Creek and Reedy Fork, one of the tributaries of the Haw. His plan was to cut the enemy off from the upper counties; to harass him by skirmishes, but to avoid a general battle; thus gaining time for the arrival of reinforcements daily expected. He rarely lay more than two days in a place, and kept his light troops under Pickens and Williams between him and the enemy; hovering about the latter; intercepting his intelligence; attacking his foraging parties, and striking at his flanks whenever exposed. Sharp skirmishes occurred between them and Tarleton's cavalry with various success. The country

being much of a wilderness, obliged both parties to be on the alert; but the Americans, accustomed to bush-fighting, were not easily surprised.

On the 6th of March, Cornwallis, learning that the light troops under Williams were very carelessly posted, put his army suddenly in motion, and crossed the Alamance in a thick fog; with the design to beat up their quarters, drive them in upon the main army, and bring Greene to action should he come to their assistance. His movement was discovered by the American patrols, and the alarm given. Williams hastily called in his detachments, and retreated with his light troops across Reedy Fork, while Lee with his legion manœuvred in front of the enemy. A stand was made by the Americans at Wetzell's Mill, but they were obliged to retire with the loss of fifty killed and wounded. Cornwallis did not pursue; evening was approaching, and he had failed in his main object; that of bringing Greene to action. The latter, fixed in his resolve of avoiding a conflict, had retreated across the Haw, in order to keep up his communication with the roads by which he expected his supplies and reinforcements. The militia of the country, who occasionally flocked to his camp, were chiefly volunteers, who fell off after every skirmish,

"going home," as he said, "to tell the news." "At this time," said he on the 10th, "I have not above eight or nine hundred of them in the field; yet there have been upwards of five thousand in motion in the course of four weeks. A force fluctuating in this manner can promise but slender hopes of success against an enemy in high discipline, and made formidable by the superiority of their numbers. Hitherto, I have been obliged to effect that by finesse which I dare not attempt by force." *

Greene had scarcely written this letter when the long expected reinforcements arrived, having been hurried on by forced marches. They consisted of a brigade of Virginia militia, under General Lawson, two brigades of North Carolina militia under Generals Butler and Eaton, and four hundred regulars enlisted for eighteen months. His whole effective force, according to official returns, amounted to four thousand two hundred and forty-three foot, and one hundred and sixty-one cavalry. Of his infantry, not quite two thousand were regulars, and of these, three-fourths were new levies. His force nearly doubled in number that of Cornwallis, which did not exceed two thousand four hundred men; but many of Greene's troops were raw and inexperienced, and had

* Letter to Governor Jefferson, March 10.

never been in battle; those of the enemy were veterans schooled in warfare, and, as it were, welded together by campaigning in a foreign land, where their main safety consisted in standing by each other.

Greene knew the inferiority of his troops in this respect; his reinforcements, too, fell far short of what he had been led to expect, yet he determined to accept the battle which had so long been offered. The corps of light troops, under Williams, which had rendered such efficient service, was now incorporated with the main body, and all detachments were ordered to assemble at Guilford, within eight miles of the enemy, where he encamped on the 14th, sending his wagons and heavy baggage to the Iron Works at Troublesome Creek, ten miles in his rear.

Cornwallis, from the difficulty of getting correct information, and from Greene's frequent change of position, had an exaggerated idea of the American force, rating it as high as eight thousand men: still he trusted in his well-seasoned veterans, and determined to attack Greene in his encampment, now that he seemed disposed for a general action. To provide against the possibility of a retreat, he sent his carriages and baggage to Bell's Mills, on Deep River, and set out at daybreak on the 15th, for Guilford.

Within four miles of that place, near the New Garden meeting-house, Tarleton with the advanced guard of cavalry, infantry, and yagers, came upon the American advanced guard, composed of Lee's partisan legion, and some mountaineers and Virginia militia. Tarleton and Lee were well matched in military prowess, and the skirmish between them was severe. Lee's horses, being from Virginia and Pennsylvania, were superior in weight and strength to those of his opponent, which had been chiefly taken from plantations in South Carolina. The latter were borne down by a charge in close column; several of their riders were dismounted, and killed or taken prisoners. Tarleton, seeing that his weakly mounted men fought to a disadvantage, sounded a retreat; Lee endeavored to cut him off: a general conflict of the vanguards, horse and foot, ensued, when the appearance of the main body of the enemy obliged Lee, in his turn, to retire with precipitation.

During this time, Greene was preparing for action on a woody eminence, a little more than a mile south of Guilford Court-house. The neighboring country was covered with forest, excepting some cultivated fields about the court-house, and along the Salisbury road, which passed through the centre of the place, from south to north.

Greene had drawn out his troops in three lines. The first, composed of North Carolina militia, volunteers and riflemen, under Generals Butler and Eaton, was posted behind a fence, with an open field in front, and woods on the flanks and in the rear. About three hundred yards behind this, was the second line, composed of Virginia militia, under Generals Stevens and Lawson, drawn up across the road, and covered by a wood. The third line, about four hundred yards in the rear of the second, was composed of Continental troops or regulars; those of Virginia under General Huger on the right, those of Maryland under Colonel Williams on the left. Colonel Washington with a body of dragoons, Kirkwood's Delaware infantry, and a battalion of Virginia militia, covered the right flank; Lee's legion, with the Virginia riflemen under Colonel Campbell, covered the left. Two six-pounders were in the road, in advance of the first line; two field-pieces with the rear line near the court-house, where General Greene took his station.

About noon the head of the British army was descried advancing spiritedly from the south along the Salisbury road, and defiling into the fields. A cannonade was opened from the two six-pounders, in front of the first

American line. It was answered by the British artillery. Neither produced much effect. The enemy now advanced coolly and steadily in three columns; the Hessians and Highlanders under General Leslie, on the right, the Royal Artillery and Guards in the centre, and Webster's brigade on the left. The North Carolinians, who formed the first line, waited until the enemy were within one hundred and fifty yards, when, agitated by their martial array and undaunted movement, they began to fall into confusion; some fired off their pieces without taking aim; others threw them down, and took to flight. A volley from the foe, a shout, and a charge of the bayonet, completed their discomfiture. Some fled to the woods, others fell back upon the Virginians, who formed the second line. General Stevens, who commanded the latter, ordered his men to open and let the fugitives pass, pretending that they had orders to retire. He had taken care, however, to post forty riflemen in the rear of his own line, with orders to fire upon any one who should leave his post. Under his spirited command and example, the Virginians kept their ground and fought bravely.

The action became much broken up and diversified by the extent of the ground. The thickness of the woods impeded the movements

of the cavalry. The reserves on both sides were called up. The British bayonet again succeeded; the second line gave way, and General Stevens, who had kept the field for some time, after being wounded in the thigh by a musket-ball, ordered a retreat.

The enemy pressed with increasing ardor against the third line, composed of Continental troops, and supported by Colonel Washington's dragoons and Kirkwood's Delawares. Greene counted on these to retrieve the day. They were regulars; they were fresh, and in perfect order. He rode along the line, calling on them to stand firm, and give the enemy a warm reception.

The first Maryland regiment which was on the right wing, was attacked by Colonel Webster, with the British left. It stood the shock bravely, and being seconded by some Virginia troops, and Kirkwood's Delawares, drove Webster across a ravine. The second Maryland regiment was not so successful. Impetuously attacked by Colonel Stewart, with a battalion of the Guards, and a company of grenadiers, it faltered, gave way, and fled, abandoning two field-pieces, which were seized by the enemy. Stewart was pursuing, when the first regiment, which had driven Webster across the ravine, came to the rescue with fixed

bayonets, while Colonel Washington spurred up with his cavalry. The fight now was fierce and bloody. Stewart was slain; the two field-pieces were retaken, and the enemy in their turn gave way and were pursued with slaughter; a destructive fire of grape-shot from the enemy's artillery checked the pursuit. Two regiments approached on the right and left; Webster recrossed the ravine and fell upon Kirkwood's Delawares. There was intrepid fighting in different parts of the field; but Greene saw that the day was lost; there was no retrieving the effect produced by the first flight of the North Carolinians. Unwilling to risk the utter destruction of his army, he directed a retreat, which was made in good order, but they had to leave their artillery on the field, most of the horses having been killed. About three miles from the field of action he made a halt to collect stragglers, and then continued on to the place of rendezvous at Speedwell's Iron Works on Troublesome Creek.

The British were too much cut up and fatigued to follow up their victory. Two regiments with Tarleton's cavalry attempted a pursuit, but were called back. Efforts were made to collect the wounded of both armies, but they were dispersed over so wide a space, among woods and thickets, that night closed

before the task was accomplished. It was a dismal night even to the victors; a night of unusual darkness, with torrents of rain. The army was destitute of tents; there were not sufficient houses in the vicinity to receive the wounded; provisions were scanty; many had tasted very little food for the last two days; comforts were out of the question. Nearly fifty of the wounded sank under their aggravated miseries, and expired before morning. The cries of the disabled and dying, who remained on the field of battle, during the night, exceeded all description. Such a complicated scene of horror and distress, adds the British writer, whose words we quote, it is hoped, for the sake of humanity, rarely occurs, even in military life.*

The loss of the Americans in this hard-fought affair was never fully ascertained. Their official returns, made immediately after the action, give little more than four hundred killed and wounded, and between eight and nine hundred missing; but Lord Cornwallis states in his despatches, that between two and three hundred of the Americans were found dead on the field of battle.

The loss sustained by his lordship, even if numerically less, was far more fatal; for, in

* Stedman, vol. ii., p. 346.

the circumstances in which he was placed, it was not to be supplied, and it completely maimed him. Of his small army, ninety-three had fallen, four hundred and thirteen were wounded, and twenty-six missing. Among the killed and wounded were several officers of note. Thus, one-fourth of his army was either killed or disabled; his troops were exhausted by fatigue and hunger; his camp was encumbered by the wounded. His victory, in fact, was almost as ruinous as a defeat.

Greene lay for two days within ten miles of him, near the Iron Works on Troublesome Creek, gathering up his scattered troops. He had imbibed the spirit of Washington, and remained undismayed by hardships or reverses. Writing to the latter, he says: "Lord Cornwallis will not give up this country, without being soundly beaten. I wish our force was more competent to the business. But I am in hopes, by little and little, to reduce him in time. His troops are good, well found, and fight with great obstinacy.

"Virginia," adds he, "has given me every support I could wish or expect, since Lord Cornwallis has been in North Carolina; and nothing has contributed more to this, than the prejudice of the people in favor of your Excellency, which has extended to me from the

friendship you have been pleased to honor me with." *

And again: "The service here is extremely severe, and the officers and soldiers bear it with a degree of patience that does them the highest honor. I have never taken off my clothes since I left the Pedee. I was taken with a fainting last night, owing, I suppose, to excessive fatigue and constant watching. I am better to-day, but far from well.—I have little prospect of acquiring much reputation while I labor under so many disadvantages. I hope my friends will make full allowances; and as for vulgar opinion, I regard it not."

In Washington he had a friend whose approbation was dearer to him than the applause of thousands, and who knew how to appreciate him. To Greene's account of the battle he sent a cheering reply. "Although the honors of the field do not fall to your lot, I am convinced you deserve them. The chances of war are various, and the best concerted measures and most flattering prospects may, and often do deceive us, especially while we are in the power of the militia. The motives which induced you to risk an action with Lord Cornwallis are supported upon the best military principle, and the consequence, if you can

* Sparks. *Correspondence of the Revolution*, iii., 267.

prevent the dissipation of your troops, will no doubt be fortunate."

The consequence, it will be found, was such as Washington, with his usual sagacity, predicted. Cornwallis, so far from being able to advance in the career of victory, could not even hold the ground he had so bravely won, but was obliged to retreat from the scene of triumph, to some secure position where he might obtain supplies for his famished army.

Leaving, therefore, about seventy of his officers and men, who were too severely wounded to bear travelling, together with a number of wounded Americans, in the New Garden meeting-house, and the adjacent buildings, under the protection of a flag of truce, and placing the rest of his wounded in wagons or on horseback, he set out, on the third day after the action, by easy marches for Cross Creek, otherwise called the Haw, an eastern branch of Cape Fear River, where was a settlement of Scottish Highlanders, stout adherents, as he was led to believe, to the royal cause. Here he expected to be plentifully supplied with provisions, and to have his sick and wounded well taken care of. Hence, too, he could open a communication by Cape Fear River, with Wilmington, and obtain from the depot recently established there, such supplies

as the country about Cross Creek did not afford.

On the day on which he began his march, he issued a proclamation, setting forth his victory, calling upon all loyal subjects to join his standard, and holding out the usual promises and threats to such as should obey or should continue in rebellion.

No sooner did Greene learn that Cornwallis was retreating, than he set out to follow him, determined to bring him again to action ; and presenting the singular spectacle of the vanquished pursuing the victor. His troops, however, suffered greatly in this pursuit, from wintry weather, deep, wet, clayey roads, and scarcity of provisions; the country through which they marched being completely exhausted; but they harassed the enemy's rear-guard with frequent skirmishes.

On the 28th, Greene arrived at Ramsey's Mills, on Deep River, hard on the traces of Cornwallis, who had left the place a few hours previously, with such precipitation, that several of his wounded, who had died while on the march, were left behind unburied. Several fresh quarters of beef had likewise been forgotten, and were seized upon with eagerness by the hungry soldiery. Such had been the urgency of the pursuit this day, that many of

the American troops sank upon the road, exhausted with fatigue.

At Deep River, Greene was brought to a stand. Cornwallis had broken down the bridge by which he had crossed; and farther pursuit for the present was impossible. The constancy of the militia now gave way. They had been continually on the march, with little to eat, less to drink, and obliged to sleep in the woods in the midst of smoke. Every step had led them from their homes and increased their privations. They were now in want of everything, for the retreating enemy left a famished country behind him. The term for which most of them had enlisted was expired, and they now demanded their discharge. The demand was just and reasonable, and, after striving in vain to shake their determination, Greene felt compelled to comply with it. His force thus reduced, it would be impossible to pursue the enemy farther. The halt he was obliged to make to collect provisions and rebuild the bridge, would give them such a start as to leave no hope of overtaking them should they continue their retreat; nor could he fight them upon equal terms should they make a stand. The regular troops would be late in the field, if raised at all: Virginia, from the unequal operation of the law for drafting, was not likely

to furnish many soldiers: Maryland, as late as the 13th instant, had not got a man; neither was there the least prospect of raising a man in North Carolina. In this situation, remote from reinforcements, inferior to the enemy in numbers, and without hope of support, what was to be done? "If the enemy falls down toward Wilmington," said he, "they will be in a position where it would be impossible for us to injure them if we had a force."* Suddenly he determined to change his course, and carry the war into South Carolina. This would oblige the enemy either to follow him, and thus abandon North Carolina; or to sacrifice all his posts in the upper part of North Carolina and Georgia. To Washington, to whom he considered himself accountable for all his policy, and from whose counsel he derived confidence and strength, he writes on the present occasion. "All things considered, I think the movement is warranted by the soundest reasons, both political and military. The manœuvre will be critical and dangerous, and the troops exposed to every hardship. But as I share it with them, I may hope they will bear up under it with that magnanimity which has always supported them, and for which they deserve everything of their country."

* Greene to Washington. *Cor. Rev.*, iii., 278.

—"I shall take every measure," adds he, "to avoid a misfortune. But necessity obliges me to commit myself to chance, and, I trust, my friends will do justice to my reputation, if any accident attends me."

In this brave spirit he apprised Sumter, Pickens, and Marion, by letter, of his intentions, and called upon them to be ready to cooperate with all the militia they could collect; promising to send forward cavalry and small detachments of light infantry, to aid them in capturing outposts before the army should arrive.

To Lafayette he writes at the same time: "I expect by this movement to draw Cornwallis out of this State, *and prevent him from forming a junction with Arnold.* If you follow to support me, it is not impossible that we may give him a drubbing, especially if General Wayne comes up with the Pennsylvanians."

In pursuance of his plan, Greene, on the 30th of March, discharged all his militia with many thanks for the courage and fortitude with which they had followed him through so many scenes of peril and hardship; and joyously did the poor fellows set out for their homes. Then, after giving his "little, distressed, though successful army," a short taste of the repose they needed, and having collected a few days' provision he set forward on the 5th of April

toward Camden, where Lord Rawdon had his headquarters.

Cornwallis, in the meantime, was grievously disappointed in the hopes he had formed of obtaining ample provisions and forage at Cross Creek, and strong reinforcements from the royalists in that neighborhood. Neither could he open a communication by Cape Fear River, for the conveyance of his troops to Wilmington. The distance by water was upwards of a hundred miles, the breadth of the river seldom above one hundred yards, the banks high, and the inhabitants on each side generally hostile. He was compelled, therefore, to continue his retreat by land, quite to Wilmington, where he arrived on the 7th of April, and his troops, weary, sick, and wounded, rested for the present from the "unceasing toils and unspeakable hardships, which they had undergone during the past three months." *

It was his lordship's intention, as soon as he should have equipped his own corps and received a part of the expected reinforcements from Ireland, to return to the upper country, in hopes of giving protection to the royal interests in South Carolina, and of preserving the health of his troops until he should concert

* See Letter of Cornwallis to Lord G. Germain, April 18. Also *Annual Register*, 1781, p. 72.

new measures with Sir Henry Clinton.* His plans were all disconcerted, however, by intelligence of Greene's rapid march toward Camden. Never, we are told, was his lordship more affected than by this news. "My situation here is very distressing," writes he. "Greene took the advantage of my being obliged to come to this place, and has marched to South Carolina. My expresses to Lord Rawdon on my leaving Cross Creek, warning him of the possibility of such a movement, have all failed; mountaineers and militia have poured into the back part of that province, and I much fear that Lord Rawdon's posts will be so distant from each other, and his troops so scattered, as to put him into the greatest danger of being beaten in detail, and that the worst of consequences may happen to most of the troops out of Charleston."†

It was too late for his lordship to render any aid by a direct move towards Camden. Before he could arrive there, Greene would have made an attack; if successful, his lordship's army might be hemmed in among the great rivers, in an exhausted country, revolutionary in its spirit, where Greene might cut off their subsistence, and render their arms useless.

* *Answer to Clinton Narrative*, Introduction, p. vi.

† Letter to Major-General Phillips.

All thoughts of offensive operations against North Carolina were at an end. Sickness, desertion, and the loss sustained at Guilford Court-house, had reduced his little army to fourteen hundred and thirty-five men.

In this sad predicament, after remaining several days in a painful state of irresolution, he determined to take advantage of Greene's having left the back part of Virginia open, to march directly into that province, and attempt a junction with the force acting there under General Phillips.

By this move, he might draw Greene back to the northward, and by the reduction of Virginia, he might promote the subjugation of the South. The move, however, he felt to be perilous. His troops were worn down by upwards of eight hundred miles of marching and counter-marching, through an inhospitable and impracticable country; they had now three hundred more before them, under still worse circumstances than those in which they first set out; for so destitute were they, notwithstanding the supplies received at Wilmington, that his lordship, sadly humorous, declared "his cavalry wanted everything, and his infantry, everything but shoes." *

There was no time for hesitation or delay;

* *Annual Register*, 1781, p. 90.

Greene might return and render the junction with Phillips impracticable: having sent an express to the latter, therefore, informing him of his coming, and appointing a meeting at Petersburg, his lordship set off on the 25th of April, on his fated march into Virginia.

We must now step back in dates to bring up events in the more northern parts of the Union.

Chapter XIV.

Arnold at Portsmouth in Virginia—Expedition Sent against him—Instructions to Lafayette—Washington at Newport—Consultations with De Rochambeau—Sailing of the French Fleet—Pursued by the English—Expedition of Lafayette to Virginia—Engagement between the English and French Fleets—Failure of the Expedition against Arnold—Letter of Washington to Colonel Laurens—Measures to Reinforce Greene—General Phillips in Command at Portsmouth—Marauds the Country—Checked by Lafayette—Mount Vernon Menaced—Death of Phillips.

IN a former chapter we left Benedict Arnold fortifying himself at Portsmouth, after his ravaging incursion. At the solicitation of Governor Jefferson, backed by Congress, the Chevalier de la Luzerne had requested the French commander at the eastward to send a ship of the line and some frigates to Chesapeake Bay to oppose the traitor. Fortunately, at this juncture a severe snow-storm

(Jan. 22d) scattered Arbuthnot's blockading squadron, wrecking one ship of the line and dismasting others, and enabled the French fleet at Newport to look abroad; and Rochambeau wrote to Washington that the Chevalier Destouches, who commanded the fleet, proposed to send three or four ships to the Chesapeake.

Washington feared the position of Arnold, and his well-known address, might enable him to withstand a mere attack by sea; anxious to insure his capture, he advised that Destouches should send his whole fleet; and that De Rochambeau should embark about a thousand men on board of it, with artillery and apparatus for a siege; engaging, on his own part, to send off immediately a detachment of twelve hundred men to co-operate. "The destruction of the corps under the command of Arnold," writes he, "is of such immense importance to the welfare of the Southern States, that I have resolved to attempt it with the detachment I now send in conjunction with the militia, even if it should not be convenient for your Excellency to detach a part of your force; provided M. Destouches is able to protect our operations by such a disposition of his fleet as will give us the command of the bay, and prevent succors from being sent from New York."

Before the receipt of this letter, the French

commanders, acting on their first impulse, had, about the 9th of February, detached M. de Tilly, with a sixty-gun ship and two frigates, to make a dash into the Chesapeake. Washington was apprised of their sailing just as he was preparing to send off the twelve hundred men spoken of in his letter to De Rochambeau. He gave the command of this detachment to Lafayette, instructing him to act in conjunction with the militia and the ships sent by Destouches, against the enemy's corps actually in Virginia. As the case was urgent, he was to suffer no delay, when on the march, for want either of provisions, forage, or wagons, but where ordinary means did not suffice, he was to resort to military impress. "You are to do no act whatever with Arnold," said the letter of instruction, "that directly or by implication may screen him from the punishment due to his treason and desertion, which, if he should fall into your hands, you will execute in the most summary manner."

Washington wrote at the same time to the Baron Steuben, informing him of the arrangements, and requesting him to be on the alert. "If the fleet should have arrived before this gets to hand," said he, "secrecy will be out of the question; if not, you will conceal your expectations, and only seem to be preparing

for defense. Arnold, on the appearance of the fleet, may endeavor to retreat through North Carolina. If you take any measure to obviate this, the precaution will be advisable. Should you be able to capture this detachment with its chief, it will be an event as pleasing as it will be useful."

Lafayette set out on his march on the 22d of February, and Washington was indulging the hope that, scanty as was the naval force sent to the Chesapeake, the combined enterprise might be successful, when on the 27th, he received a letter from the Count de Rochambeau announcing its failure. De Tilly had made his dash into Chesapeake Bay, but Arnold had been apprised by the British Admiral Arbuthnot of his approach, and had drawn his ships high up Elizabeth River. The water was too shallow for the largest French ships to get within four leagues of him. One of De Tilly's frigates ran aground, and was got off with difficulty, and that commander, seeing that Arnold was out of his reach, and fearing to be himself blockaded should he linger, put to sea and returned to Newport; having captured during his cruise a British frigate of forty-four guns, and two privateers with their prizes.

The French commanders now determined to follow the plan suggested by Washington,

and operate in the Chesapeake with their whole fleet and a detachment of land troops, being, as they said, disposed to risk everything to hinder Arnold from establishing himself at Portsmouth.

Washington set out for Newport to concert operations with the French commanders. Before his departure, he wrote to Lafayette, on the 1st of March, giving him intelligence of these intentions, and desiring him to transmit it to the Baron Steuben. "I have received a letter," adds he, "from General Greene, by which it appears that Cornwallis, with twenty-five hundred men, was penetrating the country with great rapidity, and Greene with a much inferior force retiring before him, having determined to pass the Roanoke. This intelligence and an apprehension that Arnold may make his escape before the fleet can arrive in the bay, induces me to give you greater latitude than you had in your original instructions. You are at liberty to concert a plan with the French general and naval commander for a descent into North Carolina, to cut off the detachment of the enemy which had ascended Cape Fear River, intercept if possible Cornwallis, and relieve General Greene and the Southern States. This, however, ought to be a secondary object, attempted in case of

Arnold's retreat to New York; or in case his reduction should be attended with too much delay. There should be strong reasons to induce a change of our first plan against Arnold if he is still in Virginia."

Washington arrived at Newport on the 6th of March, and found the French fleet ready for sea, the troops, eleven hundred strong, commanded by General the Baron de Viomenil, being already embarked.

Washington went immediately on board of the admiral's ship, where he had an interview with the Count de Rochambeau, and arranged the plan of the campaign. Returning on shore he was received by the inhabitants with enthusiastic demonstrations of affection; and was gratified to perceive the harmony and good will between them and the French army and fleet. Much of this he attributed to the wisdom of the commanders, and the discipline of the troops, but more to magnanimity on the one part, and gratitude on the other; and he hailed it as a happy presage of lasting friendship between the two nations.

On the 8th of March, at ten o'clock at night, he writes to Lafayette: "I have the pleasure to inform you that the whole fleet went out with a fair wind this evening about sunset. We have not heard of any move of the British

in Gardiner's Bay. Should we luckily meet with no interruption from them, and Arnold should continue in Virginia, until the arrival of M. Destouches, I flatter myself you will meet with that success which I most ardently wish, not only on the public, but your own account."

The British fleet made sail in pursuit, on the morning of the 10th; as the French had so much the start, it was hoped they would reach Chesapeake Bay before them. Washington felt the present to be a most important moment. "The success of the expedition now in agitation," said he, "seems to depend upon a naval superiority, and the force of the two fleets is so equal, that we must rather hope for, than entertain an assurance of victory. The attempt, however, made by our allies to dislodge the enemy, in Virginia, is a bold one, and should it fail, will nevertheless entitle them to the thanks of the public."

On returning to his headquarters at New Windsor, Washington on the 20th of March found letters from General Greene, informing him that he had saved all his baggage, artillery, and stores, notwithstanding the hot pursuit of the enemy, and was now in his turn following them, but that he was greatly in need of reinforcements.

"My regard for the public good, and my inclination to promote your success," writes Washington in reply, "will prompt me to give every assistance, and to make every diversion in your favor. But what can I do if I am not furnished with the means? From what I saw and learned while at the eastward, I am convinced the levies will be late in the field, and I fear far short of the requisition. I most anxiously wait the event of the present operation in Virginia. If attended with success, it may have the happiest influence on our Southern affairs, by leaving the forces of Virginia free to act. For while there is an enemy in the heart of a country, you can expect neither men nor supplies from it, in that full and regular manner in which they ought to be given."

In the meantime Lafayette with his detachment was pressing forward by forced marches for Virginia. Arriving at the Head of Elk on the 3d of March, he halted until he should receive tidings respecting the French fleet. A letter from the Baron Steuben spoke of the preparations he was making, and the facility of taking the fortifications at Portsmouth, "sword in hand." The youthful marquis was not so sanguine as the veteran baron. "Arnold," said he, "has had so much time to prepare, and plays so deep a game; nature has made

the position so respectable, and some of the troops under his orders have been in so many actions, that I do not flatter myself to succeed so easily." On the 7th he received Washington's letter of the 1st, apprising him of the approaching departure of the whole fleet with land forces. Lafayette now conducted his troops by water to Annapolis, and concluding, from the time the ships were to sail, and the winds which had since prevailed, the French fleet must be already in the Chesapeake, he crossed the bay in an open boat to Virginia, and pushed on to confer with the American and French commanders, get a convoy for his troops, and concert matters for a vigorous co-operation. Arriving at York on the 14th, he found the Baron Steuben in the bustle of military preparations, and confident of having five thousand militia ready to co-operate. These, with Lafayette's detachment, would be sufficient for the attack by land: nothing was wanting but a co-operation by sea; and the French fleet had not yet appeared, though double the time necessary for the voyage had elapsed. The marquis repaired to General Muhlenburg's camp near Suffolk, and reconnoitered with him the enemy's works at Portsmouth; this brought on a trifling skirmish, but everything appeared satisfactory; everything promised complete success.

On the 20th, word was brought that a fleet had come to anchor within the capes. It was supposed of course to be the French, and now the capture of the traitor was certain. He himself, from certain signs appeared to be in great confusion: none of his ships ventured down the bay. An officer of the French navy bore down to visit the fleet, but returned with the astounding intelligence that it was British!

Admiral Arbuthnot had in fact overtaken Destouches on the 16th of March, off the capes of Virginia. Their forces were nearly equal; eight ships of the line, and four frigates on each side, the French having more men, the English more guns. An engagement took place which lasted about an hour. The British van at first took the brunt of the action, and was severely handled; the centre came up to its relief. The French line was broken and gave way, but rallied, and formed again at some distance. The crippled state of some of his ships prevented the British admiral from bringing on a second encounter; nor did the French seek one, but shaped their course the next day back to Newport. Both sides claimed a victory. The British certainly effected the main objects they had in view; the French were cut off from the Chesapeake; the combined enterprise against Portsmouth was dis-

concerted, and Arnold was saved. Great must have been the apprehensions of the traitor, while that enterprise threatened to entrap him. He knew the peculiar peril impending over him; it had been announced in the sturdy reply of an American prisoner, to his inquiry what his countrymen would do to him if he were captured. "They would cut off the leg wounded in the service of your country and bury it with the honors of war; the rest of you they would hang!"

The feelings of Washington, on hearing of the result of the enterprise, may be judged from the following passage of a letter to Colonel John Laurens, then minister at Paris. "The failure of this expedition, which was most flattering in the commencement, is much to be regretted; because a successful blow in that quarter would, in all probability, have given a decisive turn to our affairs in all the Southern States; because it has been attended with considerable expense on our part, and much inconvenience to the State of Virginia, by the assembling of our militia; because the world is disappointed at not seeing Arnold in gibbets; and above all, because we stood in need of something to keep us afloat till the result of your mission is known; for be assured, my dear Laurens, day does not follow night more

certainly, than it brings with it some additional proof of the impracticability of carrying on the war, without the aids you were directed to solicit. As an honest and candid man, as a man whose all depends on the final and happy termination of the present contest, I assert this, while I give it decisively as my opinion, that, without a foreign loan, our present force, which is but the remnant of an army, cannot be kept together this campaign, much less will it be increased, and in readiness for another. . . . If France delays a timely and powerful aid in the critical posture of our affairs, it will avail us nothing should she attempt it hereafter. We are at this hour suspended in the balance; not from choice, but from hard and absolute necessity; and you may rely on it as a fact, that we cannot transport the provisions from the States in which they are assessed, to the army, because we cannot pay the teamsters, who will no longer work for certificates. . . . In a word, we are at the end of our tether, and now or never our deliverance must come. . . How easy would it be to retort the enemy's own game upon them; if it could be made to comport with the general plan of war, to keep a superior fleet always in these seas, and France would put us in condition to be active, by advancing us money. The ruin of the enemy's

schemes would then be certain ; the bold game they are now playing would be the means of effecting it ; for they would be reduced to the necessity of concentrating their force at capital points ; thereby giving up all the advantages they have gained in the Southern States, or be vulnerable everywhere."

Washington's anxiety was now awakened for the safety of General Greene. Two thousand troops had sailed from New York under General Phillips, probably to join with the force under Arnold, and proceed to reinforce Cornwallis. Should they form a junction, Greene would be unable to withstand them. With these considerations Washington wrote to Lafayette, urging him, since he was already three hundred miles, which was half the distance, on the way, to push on with all possible speed to join the Southern army, sending expresses ahead to inform Greene of his approach.

The letter found Lafayette on the 8th of April, at the Head of Elk, preparing to march back with his troops to the banks of the Hudson. On his return through Virginia, he had gone out of his way, and travelled all night for the purpose of seeing Washington's mother at Fredericksburg, and paying a visit to Mount Vernon. He now stood ready to obey Wash-

ington's orders, and march to reinforce General Greene ; but his troops, who were chiefly from the Eastern States, murmured at the prospect of a campaign in a southern climate, and desertions began to occur. Upon this he announced in general orders, that he was about to enter on an enterprise of great difficulty and danger, in which he trusted his soldiers would not abandon him. Any, however, who were unwilling, should receive permits to return home.

As he had anticipated, their pride was roused by this appeal. All engaged to continue forward. So great was the fear of appearing a laggard, or a craven, that a sergeant, too lame to march, hired a place in a cart to keep up with the army. In the zeal of the moment, Lafayette borrowed money on his own credit from the Baltimore merchants, to purchase summer clothing for his troops, in which he was aided, too, by the ladies of the city, with whom he was deservedly popular.

The detachment from New York, under General Phillips, arrived at Portsmouth on the 26th of March. That officer immediately took command, greatly to the satisfaction of the British officers, who had been acting under Arnold. The force now collected there amounted to three thousand five hundred men.

The garrison of New York had been greatly weakened in furnishing this detachment, but Cornwallis had urged the policy of transferring the seat of war to Virginia, even at the expense of abandoning New York ; declaring that until that State was subdued, the British hold upon the Carolinas must be difficult, if not precarious.

The disparity in force was now so great, that the Baron Steuben had to withdraw his troops, and remove the military stores into the interior. Many of the militia, too, their term of three months being expired, stacked their arms and set off for their homes, and most of the residue had to be discharged.

General Phillips had hitherto remained quiet in Portsmouth, completing the fortifications, but evidently making preparations for an expedition. On the 16th of April, he left one thousand men in garrison, and, embarking the rest in small vessels of light draught, proceeded up James River, destroying armed vessels, public magazines, and a ship-yard belonging to the State.

Landing at City Point, he advanced against Petersburg, a place of deposit of military stores and tobacco. He was met about a mile below the town by about one thousand militia, under General Muhlenburg, who, after disputing the

ground inch by inch for nearly two hours, with considerable loss on both sides, retreated across the Appomattox, breaking down the bridge behind them.

Phillips entered the town, set fire to the tobacco warehouses, and destroyed all the vessels lying in the river. Repairing and crossing the bridge over the Appomattox, he proceeded to Chesterfield Court-house, where he destroyed barracks and public stores; while Arnold, with a detachment, laid waste the magazines of tobacco in the direction of Warwick. A fire was opened by the latter from a few field-pieces on the river bank, upon a squadron of small armed vessels, which had been intended to co-operate with the French fleet against Portsmouth. The crews scuttled or set fire to them, and escaped to the north side of the river.

This destructive course was pursued until they arrived at Manchester, a small place opposite Richmond, where the tobacco warehouses were immediately in a blaze. Richmond was a leading object of this desolating enterprise, for there a great part of the military stores of the State had been collected. Fortunately, Lafayette, with his detachment of two thousand men, had arrived there by forced marches, the evening before, and being joined by about

two thousand militia and sixty dragoons (the latter principally young Virginians of family), had posted himself strongly on the high banks on the north side of the river.

There being no bridge across the river at that time, General Phillips did not think it prudent to attempt a passage in face of such a force so posted; but was extremely irritated at being thus foiled by the celerity of his youthful opponent, who now assumed the chief command of the American forces in Virginia.

Returning down the south bank of the river, to the place where his vessels awaited him, General Phillips re-embarked on the 2d of May, and dropped slowly down the river below the confluence of the Chickahominy. He was followed cautiously, and his movements watched by Lafayette, who posted himself behind the last-named river.

Despatches from Cornwallis now informed Phillips that his lordship was advancing with all speed from the South to effect a junction with him. The general immediately made a rapid move to regain possession of Petersburg. where the junction was to take place. Lafayette attempted by forced marches to get there before him, but was too late. Falling back, therefore, he recrossed James River and stationed himself some miles below Richmond,

to be at hand for the protection of the public stores collected there.

During this main expedition of Phillips, some of his smaller vessels had carried on the plunder and devastation in other of the rivers emptying into the Chesapeake Bay; setting fire to the houses where they met with resistance. One had ascended the Potomac and menaced Mount Vernon. Lund Washington, who had charge of the estate, met the flag which the enemy sent on shore, and saved the property from ravage, by furnishing the vessel with provisions. Lafayette, who heard of the circumstance, and was sensitive for the honor of Washington, immediately wrote to him on the subject. "This conduct of the person who represents you on your estate," writes he, "must certainly produce a bad effect, and contrast with the courageous replies of some of your neighbors, whose houses in consequence have been burnt. You will do what you think proper, my dear general, but friendship makes it my duty to give you confidentially the facts."

Washington, however, had previously received a letter from Lund himself, stating all the circumstances of the case, and had immediately written him a reply. He had no doubt that Lund had acted from his best judgment, and with a view to preserve the property and

buildings from impending danger, but he was stung to the quick by the idea that his agent should go on board of the enemy's vessel, carry them refreshments, and "commune with a parcel of plundering scoundrels," as he termed them. "It would have been a less painful circumstance to me to have heard," writes he, "that in consequence of your non-compliance with their request, they had burnt my house and laid my plantation in ruins. You ought to have considered yourself as my representative, and should have reflected on the bad example of communicating with the enemy and making a voluntary offer of refreshments to them, with a view to prevent a conflagration."

In concluding his letter, he expresses his opinion that it was the intention of the enemy to prosecute the plundering plan they had begun; and that it would end in the destruction of his property, but adds, that he is "prepared for the event." He advises his agent to deposit the valuable and least bulky articles in a place of safety. "Such and so many things as are necessary for common and present use must be retained, and must run their chance through the fiery trial of this summer."

Such were the steadfast purposes of Washington's mind when war was brought home to

his door, and threatening his earthly paradise of Mount Vernon.

In the meantime the desolating career of General Phillips was brought to a close. He had been ill for some days previous to his arrival at Petersburg, and by the time he reached there, was no longer capable of giving orders. He died four days afterwards, honored and deeply regretted by his brothers in arms, as a meritorious and well-tried soldier. What made his death to be more sensibly felt by them at this moment, was, that it put the traitor, Arnold, once more in the general command.

He held it, however, but for a short time, as Lord Cornwallis arrived at Petersburg on the 20th of May, after nearly a month's weary marching from Wilmington. His lordship, on taking command, found his force augmented by a considerable detachment of Royal Artillery, two battalions of light infantry, the 76th and 80th British regiments, a Hessian regiment, Lieutenant-Colonel Simcoe's corps of Queen's rangers, cavalry and infantry, one hundred yagers, Arnold's legion of royalists, and the garrison of Portsmouth. He was cheered also by intelligence that Lord Rawdon had obtained an advantage over General Greene before Camden, and that three British regiments had sailed from Cork for Charleston.

His mind, we are told, was now set at ease with regard to Southern affairs; his spirits, so long jaded by his harassing tramps about the Carolinas, were again lifted up by his augmented strength, and Tarleton assures us, that his lordship indulged in "brilliant hopes of a glorious campaign in those parts of America where he commanded." * How far these hopes were realized, we shall show in a future page.

* Tarleton, *History of the Campaign*, p. 291.

Chapter XV.

Inefficient State of the Army—Maraud of Delancey—Death of Colonel Greene—Arrival of the Count De Barras—French Naval Force Expected—Interview of Washington and De Rochambeau at Weathersfield—Plan of Combined Operations—Financial Arrangement of Robert Morris—Scheme to Attack the Works on New York Island and Capture Delancey's Corps—Encampments of American and French Armies in Westchester County—Reconnoitering Expeditions.

WHILE affairs were approaching a crisis in Virginia, troubles were threatening from the North. There were rumors of invasion from Canada; of war councils and leagues among the savage tribes; of a revival of the territorial feuds between New York and Vermont. Such, however, was the deplorable inefficiency of the military system, that though, according to the resolves of Congress, there were to have been thirty-seven thousand men under arms at the

beginning of the year, Washington's whole force on the Hudson in the month of May did not amount to seven thousand men, of whom little more than four thousand were effective.

He still had his headquarters at New Windsor, just above the Highlands, and within a few miles of West Point. Here he received intelligence that the enemy were in force on the opposite side of the Hudson, marauding the country on the north side of Croton River, and he ordered a hasty advance of Connecticut troops in that direction.

The Croton River flows from east to west across Westchester County, and formed, as it were, the barrier of the American lines. The advanced posts of Washington's army guarded it, and by its aid, protected the upper country from the incursions of those foraging parties and marauders which had desolated the neutral ground below it. The incursions most to be guarded against were those of Colonel Delancey's loyalists, a horde of tories and refugees which had their stronghold in Morrisania, and were the terror of the neighboring country. There was a petty war continually going on between them and the American outposts, often of a ruthless kind. Delancey's horse and Delancey's rangers scoured the country

and swept off forage and cattle from its fertile valleys for the British army at New York. Hence they were sometimes stigmatized by the opprobrious appellation of Cow Boys.

The object of their present incursion was to surprise an outpost of the American army stationed near a fordable part of the Croton River not far from Pine's Bridge. The post was commanded by Colonel Christopher Greene, of Rhode Island, the same who had successfully defended Fort Mercer on the Delaware, when assailed by Count Donop. He was a valuable officer, highly prized by Washington. The enterprise against his post was something like that against the post of Young's House; both had been checks to the foragers of this harassed region.

Colonel Delancey, who led this foray, was successor to the unfortunate André as adjutant-general of the British army. He conducted it secretly, and in the night, at the head of a hundred horse and two hundred foot. The Croton was forded at daybreak, just as the night-guard had been withdrawn, and the farm-houses were surprised and assailed in which the Americans were quartered. That occupied by Colonel Greene and a brother officer, Major Flagg, was first surrounded. The major started from his bed, and discharged

his pistols from a window, but was shot through the head, and afterwards despatched by cuts and thrusts of the sabre.

The door of Greene's room was burst open. He defended himself vigorously and effectively with his sword, for he had great strength, but he was overpowered by numbers, cut down, and barbarously mangled. A massacre was going on in other quarters. Besides these two officers, there were between thirty and forty killed and wounded, and several made prisoners.

It is said that Colonel Delancey was not present at the carnage, but remained on the south side of the Croton to secure the retreat of his party. It may be so; but the present exploit was in the spirit of others by which he had contributed to harry this beautiful region, and made it a "bloody ground." No foes so ruthless had the American patriots to encounter as their own tory countrymen in arms.

Before the troops ordered out by Washington arrived at the post, the marauders had made a precipitate retreat. They had attempted to carry off Greene a prisoner, but he died within three quarters of a mile of the house. His captors, as they passed by the farm-houses, told the inhabitants that, should there be any

inquiry after the colonel, they had left him dead at the edge of the woods.*

Greene was but forty-four years of age at the time of his death, and was a model of manly strength and comeliness. A true soldier of the Revolution, he had served at Lexington and Bunker's Hill; followed Arnold through the Kennebec wilderness to Quebec; fought under the walls of that city; distinguished himself by his defense of Fort Mercer on the Delaware, and by his kind treatment of his vanquished and wounded antagonist, Colonel Donop. How different the treatment experienced by him at the hands of his tory countrymen!

The commander-in-chief, we are told, heard with anguish and indignation the tragical fate of this his faithful friend and soldier. On the subsequent day, the corpse of Colonel Greene was brought to headquarters, and his funeral solemnized with military honors and universal grief.†

At this juncture, Washington's attention was called in another direction. A frigate had arrived at Boston, bringing the Count de Barras, to take command of the French naval force. He was a veteran about sixty years of

* Letter of Paymaster Hughes. See Bolton's *Westchester Co.*, vol. ii., p. 94.

† Lee's *Memoirs of the War*, vol. i., p. 457.

age, and had commanded D'Estaing's vanguard, when he forced the entrance of Newport harbor. The count brought the cheering intelligence, that an armament of twenty ships of the line, with land forces, was to sail, or had sailed, from France, under the Count de Grasse for the West Indies, and that twelve of these ships were to relieve the squadron at Newport, and might be expected on the coast of the United States in July or August.

The Count de Rochambeau, having received despatches from the court of France, now requested an interview with Washington. The latter appointed Weathersfield in Connecticut for the purpose; and met the count there on the 22d of May, hoping to settle a definite plan of the campaign. Both as yet were ignorant of the arrival of Cornwallis in Virginia. The policy of a joint expedition to relieve the Carolinas was discussed. As the French ships in Newport were still blockaded by a superior force, such an expedition would have to be made by land. A march to the Southern States was long and harassing, and always attended with a great waste of life. Such would certainly be the case at present, when it would have to be made in the heat of summer. The difficulties and expenses of land transportation, also, presented a formidable objection.

On the other hand, an effective blow might be struck at New York, the garrison having been reduced one half by detachments to the South. That important post and its dependencies might be wrested from the enemy, or, if not, they might be obliged to recall a part of their force from the South for their own defense.

It was determined, therefore, that the French troops should march from Newport as soon as possible, and form a junction with the American army on the Hudson, and that both should move down to the vicinity of New York to make a combined attack, in which the Count de Grasse should be invited to co-operate with his fleet and a body of land troops.

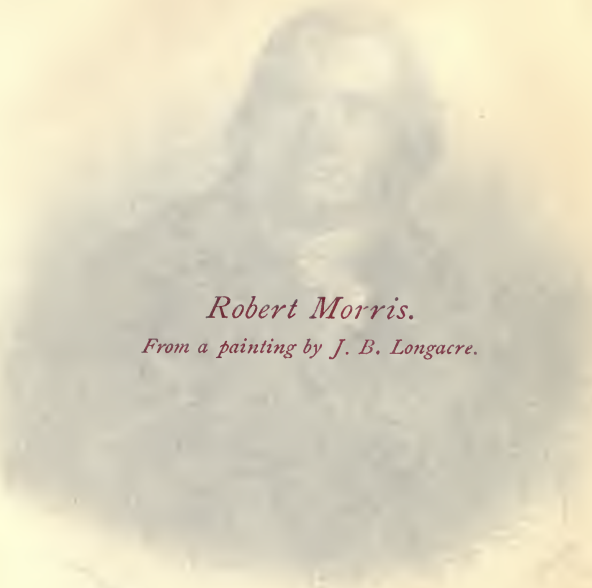
A vessel was despatched by De Rochambeau, to inform the Count de Grasse of this arrangement; and letters were addressed by Washington to the executive authorities of New Jersey and the New England States, urging them to fill up their battalions and furnish their quotas of provisions. Notwithstanding all his exertions, however, when he mustered his forces at Peekskill, he was mortified to find not more than five thousand effective men. Notwithstanding, too, all the resolutions passed in the legislatures of the various States for supplying the army, it would, at this criti-

cal moment, have been destitute of provisions, especially bread, had it not been for the zeal, talents, and activity of Mr. Robert Morris, now a delegate to Congress from the State of Pennsylvania, and recently appointed Superintendent of Finance. This patriotic and energetic man, when public means failed, pledged his own credit in transporting military stores and feeding the army. Throughout the Revolution Washington was continually baffled in the hopes caused by the resolutions of legislative bodies, too often as little alimentary as the east wind.

The Count de Rochambeau and the Duke de Lauzun being arrived with their troops in Connecticut, on their way to join the American army, Washington prepared for spirited operations; quickened by the intelligence that a part of the garrison of New York had been detached to forage the Jerseys. Two objects were contemplated by him: one, the surprisal of the British works at the north end of New York Island; the other, the capture or destruction of Delancey's corps of refugees in Morrisania. The attack upon the posts was to be conducted by General Lincoln, with a detachment from the main army, which he was to bring down by water—that on Delancey's corps by the Duke de Lauzun with his legion, aided

by Sheldon's dragoons, and a body of Connecticut troops. Both operations were to be carried into effect on the 3d of July. The duke was to march down from Ridgebury in Connecticut, for the purpose. Everything was to be conducted with secrecy and by the way of surprisal. Should anything occur to prevent Lincoln from attempting the works on New York Island, he was to land his men above Spyt den Duivel Creek, march to the high grounds in front of King's Bridge, lie concealed there until the duke's attack on Delancey's corps should be announced by firing or other means; then to dispose of his force in such manner as to make the enemy think it larger than it really was; thereby deterring troops from coming over the bridge to turn Lauzun's right, while he prevented the escape over the bridge of Delancey's refugees when routed from Morrisania.

Washington, at the same time, wrote a confidential letter to Governor Clinton, informing him of designs upon the enemy's posts. "Should we be happy enough to succeed," writes he, "and be able to hold our conquest, the advantages will be greater than can well be imagined. But I cannot flatter myself that the enemy will permit the latter, unless I am suddenly and considerably reinforced. I shall



Robert Morris.

From a painting by J. B. Longacre.

J.B. Longacre
H.B. Hall

march down the remainder of this army, and I have hopes that the French force will be near at hand at the time. But I shall, notwithstanding, direct the alarm-guns and beacons to be fired in case of success; and I have to request, that your Excellency will, upon such signals, communicate the meaning of them to the militia, and put yourself at the head of them, and march with the utmost expedition to King's Bridge, bringing with you three or four days' provision at least."

It was a service which would have been exactly to the humor of George Clinton.

In pursuance of the plan, Lincoln left the camp near Peekskill on the 1st, with eight hundred men, and artillery, and proceeded to Teller's Point, where they were embarked in boats with muffled oars, and rowed silently at night down the Tappan Sea, that region of mystery and secret enterprise. At daylight they kept concealed under the land. The Duke de Lauzun was supposed, at the same time, to be on the way from Connecticut. Washington, at three o'clock on the morning of the 2d, left his tents standing at Peekskill, and commenced his march with his main force, without baggage; making a brief halt at Croton Bridge, about nine miles from Peekskill, another at the Sleepy Hollow Church, near

Tarrytown, where he halted until dusk, and completed the rest of his march in the night, to Valentine's Hill, four miles above King's Bridge, where he arrived about sunrise. There he posted himself to cover the detached troops, and improve any advantages that might be gained by them.

Lincoln, on the morning of the 2d, had left his flotilla concealed under the eastern shore, and crossed to Fort Lee to reconnoiter Fort Washington from the cliffs on the opposite side of the Hudson. To his surprise and chagrin, he discovered a British force encamped on the north end of New York Island, and a ship-of-war anchored in the river. In fact, the troops which had been detached into the Jerseys, had returned, and the enemy were on the alert; the surprisal of the forts, therefore, was out of the question.

Lincoln's thoughts now were to aid the Duke de Lauzun's part of the scheme, as he had been instructed. Before daylight of the 3d, he landed his troops above Spyt den Duivel Creek, and took possession of the high ground on the north of Harlem River, where Fort Independence once stood. Here he was discovered by a foraging party of the enemy, fifteen hundred strong, who had sallied out at daybreak to scour the country. An irregular skir-

mish ensued. The firing was heard by the Duke de Lauzun, who was just arrived with his troops at East Chester, fatigued by a long and forced march in sultry weather. Finding the country alarmed, and all hope of surprising Delancey's corps at an end, he hastened to the support of Lincoln. Washington also advanced with his troops from Valentine's Hill. The British, perceiving their danger, retreated to their boats on the east side of Harlem River, and crossed over to New York Island. A trifling loss in killed and wounded had been sustained on each side, and Lincoln had made a few prisoners.

Being disappointed in both objects, Washington did not care to fatigue his troops any more, but suffered them to remain on their arms, and spent a good part of the day reconnoitering the enemy's works. In the afternoon he retired to Valentine's Hill, and the next day marched to Dobbs Ferry, where he was joined by the Count de Rochambeau on the 6th of July. The two armies now encamped; the Americans in two lines, resting on the Hudson at Dobbs Ferry, where it was covered by batteries, and extending eastward toward the Neperan or Sawmill River; the French in a single line on the hills farther east, reaching to the Bronx River. The beau-

tiful valley of the Neperan intervened between the encampments. It was a lovely country for a summer encampment—breezy hills commanding wide prospects, umbrageous valleys watered by bright pastoral streams, the Bronx, the Spraine, and the Neperan, and abounding with never-failing springs. The French encampment made a gallant display along the Greenburgh hills. Some of the officers, young men of rank, to whom this was all a service of romance, took a pride in decorating their tents, and forming little gardens in their vicinity. "We have a charming position among rocks and under magnificent tulip-trees;" writes one of them, the Count Dumas. General Washington was an object of their enthusiasm. He visited the tents they had so gayly embellished; for, with all his gravity, he was fond of the company of young men. They were apprised of his coming, and set out on their camp-tables plans of the battle of Trenton, of West Point, and other scenes connected with the war. The greatest harmony prevailed between the armies. The two commanders had their respective headquarters in farmhouses, and occasionally, on festive occasions, long tables were spread in the adjacent barns, which were converted into banqueting halls. The young French officers gained the good

graces of the country belles, though little acquainted with their language. Their encampment was particularly gay, and it was the boast of an old lady of the neighborhood many years after the war, that she had danced at headquarters when a girl with the celebrated Marshal Berthier, at that time one of the aides-de-camp of the Count de Rochambeau.*

The two armies thus encamped for three or four weeks. In the meantime letters urged Washington's presence in Virginia. Richard Henry Lee advised that he should come with two or three thousand good troops, and be clothed with dictatorial powers. "There is nothing, I think, more certain," writes Lee, "than that your personal call would bring into immediate exertion the force and the resources of this State and the neighboring ones, which, directed as they would be, will effectually disappoint and baffle the deep-laid schemes of the enemy."

"I am fully persuaded, and upon good military principles," writes Washington in reply, "that the measures I have adopted will give more effectual and speedy relief to the State of Virginia, than my marching thither, with dictatorial powers, at the head of every man I could draw from hence without leaving

* Bolton's *Hist. of Westchester Co.*, vol. i., p. 243.

the important posts on the North River quite defenseless, and these States open to devastation and ruin. My present plan of operation, which I have been preparing with all the zeal and activity in my power, will, I am morally certain, with proper support, produce one of two things, either the fall of New York, or a withdrawal of the troops from Virginia, excepting a garrison at Portsmouth, at which place I have no doubt of the enemy's intention of establishing a permanent post."

Within two or three days after this letter was written, Washington crossed the river at Dobbs Ferry, accompanied by the Count de Rochambeau, General de Beville, and General Duportail, to reconnoiter the British posts on the north end of New York Island. They were escorted by one hundred and fifty of the New Jersey troops, and spent the day on the Jersey heights ascertaining the exact position of the enemy on the opposite shore. Their next movement was to reconnoiter the enemy's posts at King's Bridge and on the east side of New York Island, and to cut off, if possible, such of Delancey's corps as should be found without the British lines. Five thousand troops, French and American, led by the Count de Chastellux and General Lincoln, were to protect this reconnoissance, and menace the enemy's posts.

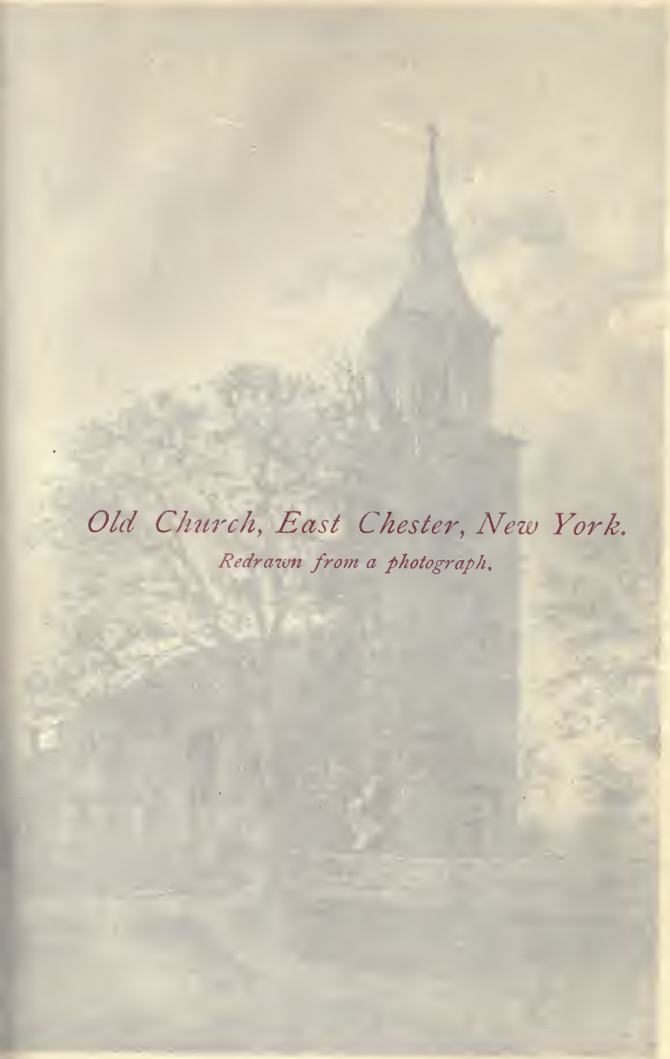
Everything was prepared in secrecy. On the 21st of July, at eight o'clock in the evening, the troops began their march in separate columns; part down the Hudson River road; part down the Sawmill River Valley; part by the East Chester road. Scammel's light infantry advanced through the fields to waylay the roads, stop all communication, and prevent intelligence getting to the enemy. Sheldon's cavalry, with the Connecticut troops, were to scour Throg's Neck. Sheldon's infantry and Lauzun's lancers were to do the same with the refugee region of Morrisania.

The whole detachment arrived at King's Bridge about daylight, and formed on the height back of Fort Independence. The enemy's forts on New York Island did not appear to have the least intelligence of what was going on, nor to be aware that hostile troops were upon the heights opposite until the latter displayed themselves in full array, their arms flashing in the morning sunshine, and their banners, American and French, unfolded to the breeze.

While the enemy was thus held in check, Washington and De Rochambeau, accompanied by engineers and by their staffs, set out under the escort of a troop of dragoons to reconnoiter the enemy's position and works from

every point of view. It was a wide reconnoissance, extending across the country outside of the British lines from the Hudson to the Sound. The whole was done slowly and scientifically, exact notes and diagrams being made of everything that might be of importance in future operations. As the "cortege" moved slowly along, or paused to make observation, it was cannonaded from the distant works, or from the armed vessels stationed on the neighboring waters, but without injuring it or quickening its movements.

According to De Rochambeau's account, the two reconnoitering generals were at one time in an awkward and hazardous predicament. They had passed, he said, to an island separated by an arm of the sea from the enemy's post on Long Island, and the engineers were employed in making scientific observations, regardless of the firing of small vessels stationed in the Sound. During this time, the two generals, exhausted by fatigue and summer heat, slept under shelter of a hedge. De Rochambeau was the first to awake, and was startled at observing the state of the tide, which, during their slumber, had been rapidly rising. Awakening Washington and calling his attention to it, they hastened to the causeway by which they had crossed from the main-



Old Church, East Chester, New York.

Redrawn from a photograph.

land. It was covered with water. Two small boats were brought, in which they embarked with the saddles and bridles of their horses. Two American dragoons then returned in the boats to the shore of the island, where the horses remained under care of their comrades. Two of the horses, which were good swimmers, were held by the bridle and guided across; the rest were driven into the water by the smack of the whip, and followed their leaders; the boats then brought over the rest of the party. De Rochambeau admired this manœuvre as a specimen of American tactics in the management of wild horses; but he thought it lucky that the enemy knew nothing of their embarrassment, which lasted nearly an hour, otherwise they might literally have been caught napping.

While the enemy's works had been thoroughly reconnoitered, light troops and lancers had performed their duty in scouring the neighborhood. The refugee posts which had desolated the country were broken up. Most of the refugees, Washington says, had fled and hid themselves in secret places; some got over by stealth to the adjacent islands, and to the enemy's shipping, and a few were caught. Having effected the purposes of their expedition, the two generals set off with their troops,

on the 23d, for their encampment, where they arrived about midnight.

The immediate effect of this threatening movement of Washington, appears in a letter of Sir Henry Clinton to Cornwallis, dated July 26th, requesting him to order three regiments to New York from Carolina. "I shall probably want them as well as the troops you may be able to spare me from the Chesapeake for such offensive or defensive operations as may offer in this quarter." *

And Washington writes to Lafayette a few days subsequently: "I think we have already effected one part of our plan of the campaign settled at Weathersfield, that is, giving a substantial relief to the Southern States, by obliging the enemy to recall a considerable part of their force from thence. Our views must now be turned towards endeavoring to expel them totally from those States, if we find ourselves incompetent to the siege of New York."

We will now give the reader a view of affairs in Virginia, and show how they were ultimately affected by these military manœuvres and demonstrations in the neighborhood of King's Bridge.

* *Correspondence relative to Operations in Virginia*, p. 153.

Chapter XVI.

Movements and Counter-Movements of Cornwallis and Lafayette in Virginia—Tarleton and his Troopers Scour the Country—A Dash at the State Legislature—Attempt to Surprise the Governor at Monticello—Retreat of Jefferson to Carter's Mountain—Steuben Outwitted by Simcoe—Lafayette Joined by Wayne and Steuben—Acts on the Aggressive—Desperate Mêlée of McPherson and Simcoe—Cornwallis Pursued to Jamestown Island—Mad Anthony in a Morass—His Impetuous Valor—Alertness of Lafayette—Washington's Opinion of the Virginia Campaign.

THE first object of Lord Cornwallis on the junction of his forces at Petersburg in May, was to strike a blow at Lafayette. The Marquis was encamped on the north side of the James River, between Wilton and Richmond, with about one thousand regulars, two thousand militia, and fifty dragoons. He was waiting for reinforcements of militia, and for the arrival of

General Wayne, with the Pennsylvania line. The latter had been ordered to the South by Washington, nearly three months previously, but unavoidably delayed. Joined by these, Lafayette would venture to receive a blow, "that being beaten, he might at least be beaten with decency, and Cornwallis pay something for his victory." *

His lordship hoped to draw him into an action before thus reinforced, and with that view, marched, on the 24th of May, from Petersburg to James River, which he crossed at Westover, about thirty miles below Richmond. Here he was joined on the 26th by a reinforcement just arrived from New York, part of which he sent under General Leslie to strengthen the garrison at Portsmouth. He was relieved also from military companionship with the infamous Arnold, who obtained leave of absence to return to New York, where business of importance was said to demand his attention. While he was in command of the British army in Virginia, Lafayette had refused to hold any correspondence, or reciprocate any of the civilities of war with him; for which he was highly applauded by Washington.

Being now strongly reinforced, Cornwallis moved to dislodge Lafayette from Richmond.

* Letter to Hamilton, May 23d.

The latter, conscious of the inferiority of his forces, decamped as soon as he heard his lordship had crossed James River. "I am resolved," said he, "on a war of skirmishes, without engaging too far, and above all, to be on my guard against that numerous and excellent cavalry, which the militia dread, as if they were so many savage beasts." He now directed his march toward the upper country, inclining to the north, to favor a junction with Wayne. Cornwallis followed him as far as the upper part of Hanover County, destroying public stores wherever found. He appears to have undervalued Lafayette, on account of his youth. "The boy cannot escape me," said he, in a letter which was intercepted. The youth of the marquis, however, aided the celerity of his movements; and now that he had the responsibility of an independent command, he restrained his youthful fire, and love of enterprise. Independence had rendered him cautious. "I am afraid of myself," said he, "as much as of the enemy." *

Cornwallis soon found it impossible either to overtake Lafayette, or prevent his junction with Wayne; he turned his attention, therefore, to other objects.

Greene, in his passage through Virginia,

* Letter to Col. Alex. Hamilton, May 23, 1780.

had urged the importance of removing horses out of the way of the enemy; his caution had been neglected; the consequences were now felt. The great number of fine horses in the stables of Virginia gentlemen, who are noted for their love of the noble animal, had enabled Cornwallis to mount many of his troops in first-rate style. These he employed in scouring the country, and destroying public stores. Tarleton and his legion, it is said, were mounted on race-horses. "Under this cloud of light troops," said Lafayette, "it is difficult to counteract any rapid movements they may choose to take!"

The State legislature had been removed for safety to Charlottesville, where it was assembled for the purpose of levying taxes, and drafting militia. Tarleton, with one hundred and eighty cavalry and seventy mounted infantry, was ordered by Cornwallis to make a dash there, break up the legislature, and carry off members. On his way thither, on the 4th of June, he captured and destroyed a convoy of arms and clothing destined for Greene's army in North Carolina. At another place he surprised several persons of note at the house of a Dr. Walker, but lingered so long breakfasting, that a person mounted on a fleet horse had time to reach Charlottesville before him, and

spread the alarm. Tarleton crossed the Rivanna, which washes the hill on which Charlottesville is situated; dispersed a small force collected on the bank, and galloped into the town thinking to capture the whole assembly. Seven alone fell into his hands; the rest had made their escape. No better success attended a party of horse under Captain McLeod, detached to surprise the governor (Thomas Jefferson), at his residence in Monticello, about three miles from Charlottesville, where several members of the legislature were his guests. The dragoons were espied winding up the mountain; the guests dispersed; the family was hurried off to the residence of Colonel Carter, six miles distant, while the governor himself made a rapid retreat on horseback to Carter's Mountain.

Having set fire to all the public stores at Charlottesville, Tarleton pushed for the point of Fork at the confluence of the Rivanna and Fluvanna; to aid, if necessary, a detachment of yagers, infantry, and hussars, sent under Colonel Simcoe to destroy a great quantity of military stores collected at that post. The Baron Steuben, who was stationed there with five hundred Virginia regulars and a few militia, and had heard of the march of Tarleton, had succeeded in transporting the greater part of

the stores, as well as his troops, across the river, and as the water was deep and the boats were all on his side, he might have felt himself secure. The unexpected appearance of Simcoe's infantry, however, designedly spread out on the opposite heights, deceived him into the idea that it was the van of the British army. In his alarm he made a night retreat of thirty miles, leaving the greater part of the stores scattered along the river bank, which were destroyed the next morning by a small detachment of the enemy sent across in canoes.

On the 10th of June, Lafayette was at length gladdened by the arrival of Wayne with about nine hundred of the Pennsylvania line. Thus reinforced, he changed his whole plan, and ventured on the aggressive. Cornwallis had gotten between him and a large deposit of military stores at Albermarle Old Court-house.

The marquis, by a rapid march at night, through a road long disused, threw himself between the British army and the stores, and, being joined by a numerous body of mountain militia, took a strong position to dispute the advance of the enemy.

Cornwallis did not think it advisable to pursue this enterprise, especially as he heard Lafayette would soon be joined by forces under Baron Steuben. Yielding easy credence, there-

fore, to a report that the stores had been removed from Albemarle Court-house, he turned his face toward the lower part of Virginia, and made a retrograde march, first to Richmond, and afterwards to Williamsburg.

Lafayette, being joined by Steuben and his forces, had about four thousand men under him, one half of whom were regulars. He now followed the British army at the distance of eighteen or twenty miles, throwing forward his light troops to harass their rear, which was covered by Tarleton and Simcoe with their cavalry and infantry.

Cornwallis arrived at Williamsburg on the 25th, and sent out Simcoe with his rangers and a company of yagers to destroy some boats and stores on the Chickahominy River, and to sweep off the cattle of the neighborhood. Lafayette heard of the ravage, and detached Lieutenant-Colonel Butler, of the Pennsylvania line, with a corps of light troops and a body of horse under Major McPherson, to intercept the marauders. As the infantry could not push on fast enough for the emergency, McPherson took up fifty of them behind fifty of his dragoons, and dashed on. He overtook a company of Simcoe's rangers under Captain Shank, about six miles from Williamsburg, foraging at a farm; a sharp

encounter took place; McPherson at the outset was unhorsed and severely hurt. The action continued. Simcoe with his infantry, who had been in the advance convoying a drove of cattle, now engaged in the fight. Butler's riflemen began to arrive, and supported the dragoons. It was a desperate mêlée; much execution was done on both sides. Neither knew the strength of the force they were contending with; but supposed it the advance guard of the opposite army. An alarm gun was fired by the British on a neighboring hill. It was answered by alarm guns at Williamsburg. The Americans supposed the whole British force coming out to assail them, and began to retire. Simcoe, imagining Lafayette to be at hand, likewise drew off, and pursued his march to Williamsburg. Both parties fought well; both had been severely handled; both claimed a victory, though neither gained one. The loss in killed and wounded on both sides was severe for the number engaged; but the statements vary, and were never reconciled. It is certain the result gave great satisfaction to the Americans, and inspired them with redoubled ardor.

An express was received by Cornwallis at Williamsburg which obliged him to change his plans. The movements of Washington in

the neighborhood of New York, menacing an attack, had produced the desired effect. Sir Henry Clinton, alarmed for the safety of the place, had written to Cornwallis, requiring a part of his troops for its protection. His lordship prepared to comply with this requisition, but as it would leave him too weak to continue at Williamsburg, he set out on the 4th of July for Portsmouth.

Lafayette followed him on the ensuing day, and took post within nine miles of his camp; intending, when the main body of the enemy should have crossed the ford to the Island of Jamestown, to fall upon the rear-guard. Cornwallis suspected his design, and prepared to take advantage of it. The wheel carriages, bat horses, and baggage, were passed over to the island under the escort of the Queen's Rangers; making a great display, as if the main body had crossed; his lordship, however, with the greater part of his forces, remained on the main-land, his right covered by ponds, the centre and left by morasses over which a few narrow causeways of logs connected his position with the country, and James Island lay in the rear. His camp was concealed by a skirt of woods, and covered by an outpost.

In the morning of the 6th, as the Americans were advancing, a negro and a dragoon, em-

ployed by Tarleton, threw themselves in their way, pretending to be deserters, and informed them that the body of the king's troops had passed James River in the night, leaving nothing behind but the rear-guard, composed of the British legion and a detachment of infantry. Persuaded of the fact, Lafayette with his troops crossed the morass on the left of the enemy by a narrow causeway of logs, and halted beyond about sunset. Wayne was detached with a body of riflemen, dragoons and continental infantry, to make the attack, while the marquis with nine hundred Continentals and some militia stood ready to support him.

Wayne easily routed a patrol of cavalry and drove in the pickets, who had been ordered to give way readily. The outpost which covered the camp defended itself more obstinately, though exceedingly galled by the riflemen. Wayne pushed forward with the Pennsylvania line, eight hundred strong, and three field-pieces to attack it; at the first discharge of a cannon more than two thousand of the enemy emerged from their concealment, and he found too late that the whole British line was in battle array before him. To retreat was more dangerous than to go on. So thinking, with that impetuous valor which had gained him the name of Mad Anthony, he ordered a charge

to be sounded, and threw himself horse and foot with shouts upon the enemy. It was a sanguinary conflict and a desperate one, for the enemy were outflanking him right and left. Fortunately, the heaviness of the fire had awakened the suspicions of Lafayette,—it was too strong for the outpost of a rear-guard. Spurring to a point of land which commanded a view of the British camp, he discovered the actual force of the enemy, and the peril of Wayne. Galloping back, he sent word to Wayne to fall back to General Muhlenburg's brigade, which had just arrived, and was forming within half a mile of the scene of conflict. Wayne did so in good order, leaving behind his three cannon, the horses which drew them having been killed.

The whole army then retired across the morass. The enemy's cavalry would have pursued them, but Cornwallis forbade it. The night was falling. The hardihood of Wayne's attack, and his sudden retreat, it is said, deceived and perplexed his lordship. He thought the Americans more strong than they really were, and the retreat a mere feint to draw him into an ambuscade. That retreat, if followed close, might have been converted into a disastrous flight.

The loss of the Americans in this brief but

severe conflict is stated by Lafayette to have been one hundred and eighteen killed, wounded and prisoners, including ten officers. The British loss was said to be five officers wounded, and seventy-five privates killed and wounded. "Our field officers," said Wayne, "were generally dismounted by having their horses either killed or wounded under them. I will not condole with the marquis for the loss of two of his, as he was frequently requested to keep at a greater distance. His natural bravery rendered him deaf to admonition."

Lafayette retreated to Green Springs, where he rallied and reposed his troops. Cornwallis crossed over to Jamestown Island after dark, and three days afterwards, passing James River with his main force, proceeded to Portsmouth. His object was, in conformity to his instructions from the ministry, to establish there or elsewhere on the Chesapeake, a permanent post, to serve as a central point for naval and military operations.

In his letters to Washington giving an account of these events, Lafayette says: "I am anxious to know your opinion of the Virginia campaign. The subjugation of this State was incontestably the principal object of the ministry. I think your diversion has been of more use than any of my manœuvres; but the latter

have been above all directed by political views. As long as his lordship desired an action, not a musket has been fired; the moment he would avoid a combat, we began a war of skirmishes; but I had always care not to compromise the army. The naval superiority of the enemy, his superiority in cavalry, in regular troops, and his thousand other advantages, make me consider myself lucky to have come off safe and sound. I had my eye fixed on negotiations in Europe, and I made it my aim to give his lordship the disgrace of a retreat." *

We will now turn to resume the course of General Greene's campaigning in the Carolinas.

* *Mémoires de Lafayette*, tom. i., p. 445.

Chapter XVII.

Greene's Retrograde Operation in South Carolina—Appears before Camden—Affair at Hobkirk's Hill—Rawdon Abandons Camden—Rapid Successes of the Americans—Greene's Attack on the Fortress of Ninety-Six—Operations against Lord Rawdon—Greene on the High Hills of Santee—Sumter Scours the Lower Country—Dash of Colonel Wade Hampton at the Gates of Charleston—Exploits of Lee and Hampton—Of Captain Armstrong at Quimby Bridge—Action in the Neighborhood—End of the Campaign.

IT will be recollected that Greene, on the 5th of April, set out from Deep River on a retrograde march, to carry the war again into South Carolina, beginning by an attack on Lord Rawdon's post at Camden. Sumter and Marion had been keeping alive the revolutionary fire in that State; the former on the northeast frontier, the latter in his favorite fighting ground between the Pedee and Santee rivers. On the reappearance of Greene, they stood ready to aid with heart and hand.

On his way to Camden, Greene detached Lee to join Marion with his legion, and make an attack upon Fort Watson by way of diversion. For himself, he appeared before Camden, but finding it too strong and too well garrisoned, fell back about two miles, and took post at Hobkirk's Hill, hoping to draw his lordship out. He succeeded but too well. His lordship attacked him on the 25th of April, coming upon him partly by surprise. There was a hard-fought battle, but through some false move among part of his troops, Greene was obliged to retreat. His lordship did not pursue, but shut himself up in Camden, waiting to be rejoined by part of his garrison which was absent.

Greene posted himself near Camden Ferry on the Wateree, to intercept these reinforcements. Lee and Marion, who had succeeded in capturing Fort Watson, also took a position on the high hills of Santee for the same purpose. Their efforts were unavailing. Lord Rawdon was rejoined by the other part of his troops. His superior force now threatened to give him the mastery. Greene felt the hazardous nature of his situation. His troops were fatigued by their long marchings; he was disappointed of promised aid and reinforcements from Virginia; still he was undismayed, and prepared

for another of his long and stubborn retreats. "We must always operate," said he, "on the maxim that your enemy will do what he ought to do. Lord Rawdon will push us back to the mountains, but we will dispute every inch of ground in the best manner we can." Such were his words to General Davie on the evening of the 9th of May, as he sat in his tent with a map before him studying the roads and fastnesses of the country. An express was to set off for Philadelphia the next morning, and he requested General Davie, who was of that city, to write to the members of Congress with whom he was acquainted, painting in the strongest colors their situation and gloomy prospects.

The very next morning there was a joyful reverse. Greene sent for General Davie. "Rawdon," cried he, exultingly, "is preparing to evacuate Camden; that place was the key of the enemy's line of posts, they will now all fall or be evacuated; all will now go well. Burn your letters. I shall march immediately to the Congaree."

His lordship had heard of the march of Cornwallis into Virginia, and that all hope of aid from him was at an end. His garrison was out of provisions. All supplies were cut off by the Americans; he had no choice but to

evacuate. He left Camden in flames. Immense quantities of stores and baggage were consumed, together with the court-house, the gaol, and many private houses.

Rapid successes now attended the American arms. Fort Motte, the middle post between Camden and Ninety-Six, was taken by Marion and Lee. Lee next captured Granby, and marched to aid Pickens in the siege of Augusta; while Greene, having acquired a supply of arms, ammunition, and provisions, from the captured forts, sat down before the fortress of Ninety-Six, on the 22d of May. It was the great mart and stronghold of the royalists, and was principally garrisoned by royalists from New Jersey and New York, commanded by Colonel Cruger, a native of New York. The siege lasted for nearly a month. The place was valiantly defended. Lee arrived with his legion, having failed before Augusta, and invested a stockaded fort which formed part of the works.

Word was brought that Lord Rawdon was pressing forward with reinforcements, and but a few miles distant on the Saluda. Greene endeavored to get up Sumter, Marion, and Pickens to his assistance, but they were too far on the right of Lord Rawdon to form a junction. The troops were eager to storm the

works before his lordship should arrive. A partial assault was made on the 18th of June. It was a bloody contest. The stockaded fort was taken, but the troops were repulsed from the main works.

Greene retreated across the Saluda, and halted at Bush River, at twenty miles' distance, to observe the motion of the enemy. In a letter thence to Washington, he writes: "My fears are principally from the enemy's superior cavalry. To the northward cavalry is nothing, from the numerous fences; but to the southward, a disorder, by a superior cavalry, may be improved into a defeat, and a defeat into a rout. Virginia and North Carolina could not be brought to consider cavalry of such great importance as they are to the security of the army and the safety of a country."

Lord Rawdon entered Ninety-Six on the 21st, but sallied forth again on the 24th, taking with him all the troops capable of fatigue, two thousand in number, without wheel carriage of any kind, or even knapsacks, hoping by a rapid move to overtake Greene. Want of provisions soon obliged him to give up the pursuit, and return to Ninety-Six. Leaving about one half of his force there, under Colonel Cruger, he sallied a second time from Ninety-Six, at the head of eleven hundred infantry,

with cavalry, artillery, and field-pieces, marching by the south side of the Saluda for the Congaree.

He was now pursued in his turn by Greene and Lee. In this march more than fifty of his lordship's soldiers fell dead from heat, fatigue, and privation. At Orangeburg, where he arrived on the 8th of July, his lordship was joined by a large detachment under Colonel Stuart.

Greene had followed him closely, and having collected all his detachments, and being joined by Sumter, appeared within four miles of Orangeburg, on the 10th of July, and offered battle. The offer was not accepted, and the position of Lord Rawdon was too strong to be attacked. Greene remained there two or three days; when, learning that Colonel Cruger was advancing with the residue of the forces from Ninety-Six, which would again give his lordship a superiority of force, he moved off with his infantry on the night of the 13th of July, crossed the Saluda, and posted himself on the east side of the Wateree, at the hills of Santee. In this salubrious and delightful region, where the air was pure and breezy, and the water delicate, he allowed his weary soldiers to repose and refresh themselves, awaiting the arrival of some continental troops and militia

from North Carolina, when he intended to resume his enterprise of driving the enemy from the interior of the country.

At the time when he moved from the neighborhood of Orangeburg (July 13th), he detached Sumter with about a thousand light troops to scour the lower country, and attack the British posts in the vicinity of Charleston, now left uncovered by the concentration of their forces at Orangeburg. Under Sumter acted Marion, Lee, the Hamptons, and other enterprising partisans. They were to act separately in breaking up the minor posts at and about Dorchester, but to unite at Monk's Corner, where Lieutenant-Colonel Coates was stationed with the ninth regiment. This post carried, they were to reunite with Greene's army on the high hills of Santee.

Scarce was Sumter on his march, when he received a letter from Greene, dated July 14th, stating that Cruger had formed a junction with Lord Rawdon the preceding night; no time, therefore, was to be lost. "Push your operations night and day: station a party to watch the enemy's motions at Orangeburg. Keep Colonel Lee and General Marion advised of all matters from above, and tell Colonel Lee to thunder even at the gates of Charleston."

Conformably to these orders, Colonel Henry

Hampton with a party was posted to keep an eye on Orangeburg. Lee with his legion, accompanied by Lieutenant-Colonel Wade Hampton, and a detachment of cavalry, was sent to carry Dorchester, and then press forward to the gates of Charleston; while Sumter, with the main body, took up his line of march along the road on the south side of the Congaree, towards Monk's Corner.

As Lee approached Dorchester, Colonel Wade Hampton, with his cavalry, passed to the east of that place, to a bridge on Goose Creek, to cut off all communication between the garrison and Monk's Corner. His sudden appearance gave the alarm, the garrison abandoned its post, and when Lee arrived there he found it deserted. He proceeded to secure a number of horses and wagons, and some fixed ammunition, which the garrison had left behind, and to send them off to Hampton. Hampton, kept in suspense by this delay, lost patience. He feared that the alarm would spread through the country, and the dash into the vicinity of Charleston be prevented—or, perhaps, that Lee might intend to make it by himself. Abandoning the bridge at Goose Creek, therefore, he set off with his cavalry, clattered down to the neighborhood of the lines, and threw the city into confusion. The bells

rang, alarm guns were fired, the citizens turned out under arms. Hampton captured a patrol of dragoons and a guard, at the Quarter House; completed his bravado by parading his cavalry in sight of the sentinels on the advanced works, and then retired, carrying off fifty prisoners, several of them officers.

Lee arrived in the neighborhood on the following day, but too late to win any laurels. Hampton had been beforehand with him, made the dash, and "thundered at the gate." Both now hastened to rejoin Sumter on the evening of the 16th, who was only waiting to collect his detachments, before he made an attack on Colonel Coates at Monk's Corner. The assault was to be made on the following morning. During the night Coates decamped in silence; the first signal of his departure was the bursting of flames through the roof of a brick church, which he had used as a magazine, and which contained stores that could not be carried away. A pursuit was commenced; Lee with his legion, and Hampton with the State cavalry, took the lead. Sumter followed with the infantry. The rear-guard of the British, about one hundred strong, was overtaken with the baggage, at the distance of eighteen miles. They were new troops, recently arrived from Ireland, and had not seen service. On being

charged by the cavalry, sword in hand, they threw down their arms without firing a shot, and cried for quarter, which was granted. While Lee was securing them, Captain Armstrong with the first section of cavalry pushed on in pursuit of Coates and the main body. That officer had crossed a wooden bridge over Quimby Creek, loosened the planks, and was only waiting to be rejoined by his rear-guard, to throw them off, and cut off all pursuit. His troops were partly on a causeway beyond the bridge, partly crowded in a lane. He had heard no alarm guns, and knew nothing of an enemy being at hand, until he saw Armstrong spurring up with his section. Coates gave orders for his troops to halt, form, and march up; a howitzer was brought to bear upon the bridge, and a fatigue party rushed forward to throw off the planks. Armstrong saw the danger, dashed across the bridge, with his section, drove off the artillerists, and captured the howitzer before it could be discharged. The fatigue men, who had been at work on the bridge, snatched up their guns, gave a volley, and fled. Two dragoons fell dead by the howitzer; others were severely wounded. Armstrong's party, in crossing the bridge, had displaced some of the planks and formed a chasm. Lieutenant Carrington, with the sec-

ond section of dragoons, leaped over it; the chasm being thus enlarged, the horses of the third section refused. A pell-mell fight took place between the handful of dragoons who had crossed, and some of the enemy. Armstrong and Carrington were engaged hand to hand with Colonel Coates and his officers, who defended themselves from behind a wagon. The troops were thronging to their aid from lane and causeway. Armstrong, seeing the foe too strong in front, and no reinforcement coming on in rear, wheeled off with some of his men to the left, galloped into the woods, and pushed up along the stream to ford it, and seek the main body.

During the mêlée, Lee had come up and endeavored with the dragoons of the third section to replace the planks of the bridge. Their efforts were vain; the water was deep, the mud deeper; there was no foothold, nor was there any firm spot where to swim the horses across.

While they were thus occupied, Colonel Coates, with his men, opened a fire upon them from the other end of the bridge; having no fire-arms to reply with, they were obliged to retire. The remainder of the planks were then thrown off from the bridge, after which Colonel Coates took post on an adjacent plantation,

made the dwelling-house, which stood on a rising ground, his citadel, planted the howitzer before it, and distributed part of his men in outhouses and within fences and garden pickets, which sheltered them from the attack of cavalry. Here he awaited the arrival of Sumter with the main body, determined to make a desperate defense.

It was not until three o'clock in the afternoon, that Sumter with his forces appeared upon the ground, having had to make a considerable circuit on account of the destruction of the bridge.

By four o'clock the attack commenced. Sumter, with part of the troops, advanced in front under cover of a line of negro huts, which he wished to secure. Marion, with his brigade, much reduced in number, approached on the right of the enemy, where there was no shelter but fences; the cavalry, not being able to act, remained at a distance as a reserve, and, if necessary, to cover a retreat.

Sumter's brigade soon got possession of the huts, where they used their rifles with sure effect. Marion and his men rushed up through a galling fire to the fences on the right. The enemy retired within the house and garden, and kept up a sharp fire from doors and windows and picketed fence. Unfortunately, the Americans had neglected to bring on their

artillery; their rifles and muskets were not sufficient to force the enemy from his stronghold. Having repaired the bridge, they sent off for the artillery and a supply of powder, which accompanied it. The evening was at hand; their ammunition was exhausted, and they retired in good order, intending to renew the combat with artillery in the morning. Leaving the cavalry to watch and control the movements of the enemy, they drew off across Quimby Bridge, and encamped at the distance of three miles.

Here, when they came to compare notes, it was found that the loss in killed and wounded had chiefly fallen on Marion's corps. His men, from their exposed situation, had borne the brunt of the battle; while Sumter's had suffered but little, being mostly sheltered in the huts. Jealousy and distrust were awakened, and discord reigned in the camp. Partisan and volunteer troops readily fall asunder under such circumstances. Many moved off in the night. Lee, accustomed to act independently, and unwilling, perhaps, to acknowledge Sumter as his superior officer, took up his line of march for headquarters without consulting him. Sumter still had force enough, now that he was joined by the artillery, to have held the enemy in a state of siege; but

he was short of ammunition, only twenty miles from Charleston, at a place accessible by tide-water, and he apprehended the approach of Lord Rawdon, who, it was said, was moving down from Orangeburg. He therefore retired across the Santee, and rejoined Greene at his encampment.

So ended this foray, which fell far short of the expectations formed from the spirit and activity of the leaders and their men. Various errors have been pointed out in their operations, but concerted schemes are rarely carried out in all their parts by partisan troops. One of the best effects of the incursion, was the drawing down Lord Rawdon from Orangeburg, with five hundred of his troops. He returned no more to the upper country, but sailed not long after from Charleston for Europe.

Colonel Stuart, who was left in command at Orangeburg, moved forward from that place, and encamped on the south side of the Congaree River, near its junction with the Wateree, and within sixteen miles of Greene's position on the high hills of Santee. The two armies lay in sight of each other's fires, but two large rivers intervened, to secure each party from sudden attack. Both armies, however, needed repose, and military operations were suspended,

as if by mutual consent, during the sultry summer heat.

The campaign had been a severe and trying one, and checkered with vicissitudes; but Greene had succeeded in regaining the greater part of Georgia and the two Carolinas, and, as he said, only wanted a little assistance from the North to complete their recovery. He was soon rejoiced by a letter from Washington, informing him that a detachment from the army of Lafayette might be expected to bring him the required assistance; but he was made still more happy by the following cordial passage in the letter: "It is with the warmest pleasure I express my full approbation of the various movements and operations which your military conduct has lately exhibited, while I confess to you that I am unable to conceive what more could have been done under your circumstances, than has been displayed by your little, persevering, and determined army."

Chapter XVIII.

Washington Disappointed as to Reinforcements—French Armament Destined for the Chesapeake—Attempts on New York Postponed—March of the Armies to the Chesapeake—Stratagems to Deceive the Enemy—Arnold Ravages New London—Washington at Philadelphia—March of the Two Armies through the City—Cornwallis at Yorktown—Preparations to Proceed against him—Visit to Mount Vernon.

AFTER the grand reconnoissance of the posts on New York Island, related in a former page, the confederate armies remained encamped about Dobbs Ferry and the Greenburg hills, awaiting an augmentation of force for their meditated attack. To Washington's great disappointment, his army was but tardily and scantily recruited, while the garrison of New York was augmented by the arrival of three thousand Hessian troops from Europe. In this predicament he despatched a circular letter to the

governments of the Eastern States, representing his delicate and embarrassed situation. "Unable to advance with prudence, beyond my present position," writes he, "while, perhaps, in the general opinion, my force is equal to the commencement of operations against New York, my conduct must appear, if not blamable, highly mysterious at least. Our allies, who were made to expect a very considerable augmentation of force by this time, instead of seeing a prospect of advancing, must conjecture, upon good grounds, that the campaign will waste fruitlessly away. It will be no small degree of triumph to our enemies, and will have a pernicious influence upon our friends in Europe, should they find such a failure of resource, or such a want of energy to draw it out, that our bosted and extensive preparations end only in idle parade. . . . The fulfilment of my engagement must depend upon the degree of vigor with which the executives of the several States exercise the powers with which they have been vested, and enforce the laws lately passed for filling up and supplying the army. In full confidence that the means which have been voted will be obtained, I shall continue my operations."

Until we study Washington's full, perspicuous letters, we know little of the difficulties he

had to struggle with in conducting his campaigns; how often the sounding resolves of legislative bodies disappointed him; how often he had to maintain a bold front when his country failed to back him; how often, as in the siege of Boston, he had to carry on the war without powder!

In a few days came letters from Lafayette, dated 26th and 30th of July, speaking of the embarkation of the greatest part of Cornwallis's army at Portsmouth. "There are in Hampton Roads thirty transport ships full of troops, most of them red coats, and eight or ten brigs with cavalry on board." He supposed their destination to be New York, yet, though wind and weather were favorable, they did not sail. "Should a French fleet now come into Hampton Roads," adds the sanguine marquis, "the British army would, I think, be ours."

At this juncture arrived the French frigate Concorde at Newport, bringing despatches from Admiral the Count de Grasse. He was to leave St. Domingo on the 3d of August, with between twenty-five and thirty ships of the line, and a considerable body of land forces, and to steer immediately for the Chesapeake.

This changed the face of affairs, and called for a change in the game. All attempt upon New York was postponed; the whole of the

French army, and as large a part of the Americans as could be spared, were to move to Virginia, and co-operate with the Count de Grasse for the redemption of the Southern States. Washington apprised the count by letter of this intention. He wrote also to Lafayette on the 15th of August: "By the time this reaches you, the Count de Grasse will either be in the Chesapeake, or may be looked for every moment. Under these circumstances, whether the enemy remain in full force, or whether they have only a detachment left, you will immediately take such a position as will best enable you to prevent their sudden retreat through North Carolina, which I presume they will attempt the instant they perceive so formidable an armament."

Should General Wayne, with the troops destined for South Carolina, still remain in the neighborhood of James River, and the enemy have made no detachment to the southward, the marquis was to detain those troops until he heard again from Washington, and was to inform General Greene of the cause of their detention.

"You shall hear further from me," concludes the letter, "as soon as I have concerted plans and formed dispositions for sending a reinforcement from hence. In the meantime, I have

Count De Grasse.

only to recommend a continuance of that prudence and good conduct which you have manifested through the whole of your campaign. You will be particularly careful to conceal the unexpected arrival of the count; because, if the enemy are not apprised of it, they will stay on board their transports in the bay, which will be the luckiest circumstance in the world."

Washington's "soul was now in arms." At length, after being baffled and disappointed so often by the incompetency of his means, and above all, thwarted by the enemy's naval potency, he had the possibility of coping with them both on land and sea. The contemplated expedition was likely to consummate his plans, and wind up the fortunes of the war, and he determined to lead it in person. He would take with him something more than two thousand of the American army; the rest, chiefly Northern troops, were to remain with General Heath, who was to hold command of West Point, and the other posts of the Hudson.

Perfect secrecy was maintained as to this change of plan. Peparations were still carried on, as if for an attack upon New York. An extensive encampment was marked out in the Jerseys, and ovens erected, and fuel provided for the baking of bread; as if a part of the besieging force was to be stationed there, thence

to make a descent upon the enemy's garrison on Staten Island, in aid of the operations against the city. The American troops, themselves, were kept in ignorance of their destination. "General Washington," observes one of the shrewdest of them, "matures his great plans and designs under an impenetrable veil of secrecy, and while we repose the fullest confidence in our chief, our opinions (as to his intentions) must be founded only on doubtful conjecture." *

Previous to his decampment, Washington sent forward a party of pioneers to clear the roads towards King's Bridge, as if the posts recently reconnoitered were about to be attempted. On the 19th of August, his troops were paraded with their faces in that direction. When all were ready, however, they were ordered to face about, and were marched up along the Hudson River towards King's Ferry.

De Rochambeau, in like manner, broke up his encampment, and took the road by White Plains, North Castle, Pine's Bridge, and Crompond, towards the same point. All Westchester County was again alive with the tramp of troops, the gleam of arms, and the lumbering of artillery and baggage wagons along its roads.

* See Thacher's *Military Journal*, p. 322.

On the 20th, Washington arrived at King's Ferry, and his troops began to cross the Hudson with their baggage, stores, and cannon, and encamp at Haverstraw. He himself crossed in the evening, and took up his quarters at Colonel Hay's, at the White House. Thence he wrote confidentially to Lafayette, on the 21st, now first apprising him of his being on the march with the expedition, and repeating his injunctions that the land and naval forces, already at the scene of action, should so combine their operations, that the English, on the arrival of the French fleet, might not be able to escape. He wrote also to the Count de Grasse (presuming that the letter would find him in the Chesapeake) urging him to send up all his frigates and transports to the Head of Elk, by the 8th of September, for the transportation of the combined army, which would be there by that time. He informed him also, that the Count de Barras had resolved to join him in the Chesapeake with his squadron. One is reminded of the tissue of movements planned from a distance, which ended in the capture of Burgoyne.

On the 22d, the French troops arrived by their circuitous route, and began to cross to Stony Point with their artillery, baggage, and stores. The operation occupied between two

and three days; during which time Washington took the Count de Rochambeau on a visit to West Point, to show him the citadel of the Highlands, an object of intense interest, in consequence of having been the scene of Arnold's treason.

The two armies having safely crossed the Hudson, commenced on the 25th, their several lines of march towards the Jerseys; the Americans for Springfield on the Rahway, the French for Whippany towards Trenton. Both armies were still kept in the dark as to the ultimate object of their movement. An intelligent observer, already quoted, who accompanied the army, writes: "Our situation reminds me of some theatrical exhibition, where the interest and expectations of the spectators are continually increasing, and where curiosity is wrought to the highest point. Our destination has been for some time matter of perplexing doubt and uncertainty; bets have run high on one side, that we were to occupy the ground marked out on the Jersey shore, to aid in the siege of New York; and on the other, that we are stealing a march on the enemy, and are actually destined to Virginia, in pursuit of the army under Cornwallis. . . . A number of bateaux mounted on carriages have followed in our train; supposed for the pur-

pose of conveying the troops over to Staten Island." *

The mystery was at length solved. "We have now passed all the enemy's posts," continues the foregoing writer, "and are pursuing our route, with increased rapidity, toward Philadelphia. Wagons have been prepared to carry the soldiers' packs, that they may press forward with greater facility. Our destination can no longer be a secret. Cornwallis is unquestionably the object of our present expedition. . . . His Excellency, General Washington, having succeeded in a masterly piece of *generalship*, has now the satisfaction of leaving his adversary to ruminate on his own mortifying situation, and to anticipate the perilous fate which awaits his friend, Lord Cornwallis, in a different quarter." †

* Thacher's *Military Journal*, p. 323.

† Washington several years afterwards, speaking of this important march in a letter to Noah Webster, writes: "That much trouble was taken, and finesse used, to misguide and bewilder Sir Henry Clinton in regard to the real object, by fictitious communications, as well as by making a deceptive provision of ovens, forage, and boats in his neighborhood, is certain. Nor were less pains taken to deceive our own army, for I had always conceived where the imposition does not completely take place at home, it would never sufficiently succeed abroad."—Sparks, ix., 404.

Washington had in fact reached the Delaware with his troops, before Sir Henry Clinton was aware of their destination. It was too late to oppose their march, even had his forces been adequate. As a kind of counterplot, therefore, and in the hope of distracting the attention of the American commander, and drawing off a part of his troops, he hurried off an expedition to the eastward, to insult the State of Connecticut, and attack her seaport of New London.

The command of this expedition, which was to be one of ravage and destruction, was given to Arnold, as if it was necessary to complete the measure of his infamy, that he should carry fire and sword into his native State, and desecrate the very cradle of his infancy.

On the 6th of September he appeared off the harbor of New London with a fleet of ships and transports and a force of two thousand infantry and three hundred cavalry; partly British troops, but a great part made up of American royalists and refugees, and Hessian yagers.

New London stands on the west bank of the river Thames. The approach to it was defended by two forts on opposite sides of the river, and about a mile below the town; Fort Trumbull on the west and Fort Griswold on

New London, Connecticut.

Redrawn from an early print.

the east side, on a height called Gorton Hill. The troops landed in two divisions of about eight hundred men each; one under Lieutenant-Colonel Eyre on the east side, the other under Arnold on the west, on the same side with New London, and about three miles below it. Arnold met with but little opposition. The few militia which manned an advance battery and Fort Trumbull, abandoned their posts, and crossed the river to Fort Griswold. He pushed on and took possession of the town.

Colonel Eyre had a harder task. The militia, about one hundred and fifty-seven strong, had collected in Fort Griswold, hastily and imperfectly armed it is true, some of them merely with spears, but they were brave men, and had a brave commander, Colonel William Ledyard, brother of the celebrated traveller. The fort was square and regularly built. Arnold, unaware of its strength, had ordered Colonel Eyre to take it by a coup-de-main. He discovered his mistake, and sent counter-orders, but too late.

Colonel Eyre forced the pickets; made his way into the fosse, and attacked the fort on three sides; it was bravely defended; the enemy were repeatedly repulsed; they returned to the assault, scrambled up on each other's shoulders, effected a lodgment on the fraise, and

made their way with fixed bayonets through the embrasures. Colonel Eyre received a mortal wound near the works; Major Montgomery took his place; a negro thrust him through with a spear as he mounted the parapet; Major Bromfield succeeded to the command, and carried the fort at the point of the bayonet. In fact, after the enemy were within the walls, the fighting was at an end and the slaughter commenced. Colonel Ledyard had ordered his men to lay down their arms; but the enemy, exasperated by the resistance they had experienced, and by the death of their officers, continued the deadly work of the musket and the bayonet. Colonel Ledyard, it is said, was thrust through with his own sword after yielding it up to Major Bromfield. Seventy of the garrison were slain, and thirty-five desperately wounded; and most of them after the fort had been taken. The massacre was chiefly perpetrated by the tories, refugees, and Hessians. Major Bromfield himself was a New Jersey loyalist. The rancor of such men against their patriot countrymen was always deadly. The loss of the enemy was two officers and forty-six soldiers killed, and eight officers and one hundred and thirty-five soldiers wounded.

Arnold, in the meantime, had carried on the work of destruction at New London. Some of

the American shipping had effected their escape up the river, but a number were burnt. Fire, too, was set to the public stores; it communicated to the dwelling-houses, and, in a little while, the whole place was wrapped in flames. The destruction was immense, not only of public but private property: many families once living in affluence were ruined and rendered homeless.

Having completed his ravage, Arnold retreated to his boats, leaving the town still burning. Alarm guns had roused the country; the traitor was pursued by the exasperated yeomanry; he escaped their well-merited vengeance, but several of his men were killed and wounded.

So ended his career of infamy in his native land; a land which had once delighted to honor him, but in which his name was never thenceforth to be pronounced without a malediction.

The expedition, while it added one more hateful and disgraceful incident to this unnatural war, failed of its main object. It had not diverted Washington from the grand object on which he had fixed his mind. On the 30th of August, he, with his suite, had arrived at Philadelphia about noon, and alighted at the city tavern amidst enthusiastic crowds, who

welcomed him with acclamations, but wondered at the object of his visit. During his sojourn in the city he was hospitably entertained at the house of Mr. Morris, the patriotic financier. The greatest difficulty with which he had to contend in his present enterprise, was the want of funds, part of his troops not having received any pay for a long time, and having occasionally given evidence of great discontent. The service upon which they were going was disagreeable to the Northern regiments, and the *douceur* of a little hard money would have an effect, Washington thought, to put them into a proper temper. In this emergency he was accommodated by the Count de Rochambeau, with a loan of twenty thousand hard dollars, which Mr. Robert Morris engaged to repay by the 1st of October. This pecuniary pressure was relieved by the arrival in Boston, on the 25th of August, of Colonel John Laurens from his mission to France, bringing with him two and a half millions of livres in cash, being part of a subsidy of six millions of livres granted by the French king.

On the 2d of September the American troops passed through Philadelphia. Their line of march, including appendages and attendants, extended nearly two miles. The general officers and their staffs were well dressed and well

mounted, and followed by servants and baggage. In the rear of every brigade were several field-pieces with ammunition wagons. The soldiers kept step to the sound of the drum and fife. In the rear followed a great number of wagons laden with tents, provisions, and baggage, beside a few soldiers' wives and children. The weather was warm and dry. The troops as they marched raised a cloud of dust "like a smothering snow-storm," which almost blinded them. The begriming effect was especially mortifying to the campaigner whom we quote, "as ladies were viewing them from the windows of every house as they passed." Notwithstanding the dusty and somewhat ragged plight of the soldiery, however, they were cheered with enthusiasm by the populace, who hailed them as the war-worn defenders of the country.

The French troops entered on the following day, but in different style. Halting within a mile of the city they arranged their arms and accoutrements; brushed the dust off of their gay white uniforms faced with green, and then marched in with buoyant step and brilliant array to the swelling music of a military band. The streets were again thronged by the shouting populace. The windows were crowded with ladies; among whom probably were some of

the beauties who had crowned the British knights in the chivalrous mime of the Mischianza, now ready to bestow smiles and wreaths on their Gallic rivals.

At Philadelphia Washington received despatches from Lafayette, dated the 21st and 24th of August, from his camp at the Forks of York River in Virginia. The embarkation at Portsmouth, which the marquis had supposed might be intended for New York, was merely for Yorktown, where Cornwallis had determined to establish the permanent post ordered in his instructions.

Yorktown was a small place situated on a projecting bank on the south side of York River, opposite a promontory called Gloucester Point. The river between was not more than a mile wide, but deep enough to admit ships of a large size and burthen. Here concentrating his forces, he had proceeded to fortify the opposite points, calculating to have the works finished by the beginning of October; at which time Sir Henry Clinton intended to recommence operations on the Chesapeake. Believing that he had no present enemy but Lafayette to guard against, Cornwallis felt so secure in his position, that he wrote to Sir Henry on the 22d of August, offering to detach a thousand or twelve hundred men to strengthen New

York against the apprehended attack of the combined armies.

While Cornwallis, undervaluing his youthful adversary, felt thus secure, Lafayette, in conformity to the instructions of Washington, was taking measures to cut off any retreat by land which his lordship might attempt on the arrival of De Grasse. With this view he called upon General Thomas Nelson, the Governor of Virginia, for six hundred of the militia to be collected upon Blackwater; detached troops to the south of James River, under pretext of a design to dislodge the British from Portsmouth, and requested General Wayne to move southward, to be ready to cross James River at Westover.

As to himself, Lafayette was prepared, as soon as he should hear of the arrival of De Grasse, to march at once to Williamsburg and form a junction with the troops which were to be landed from the fleet. Thus a net was quietly drawn round Cornwallis by the youthful general, while the veteran himself felt so secure that he was talking of detaching troops to New York.

Lafayette, at the time of writing his despatches, was ignorant that Washington had taken command of the expedition coming to his aid, and expressed an affectionate solicitude

on the subject. "In the present state of affairs, my dear general," writes he, "I hope you will come yourself to Virginia, and that, if the French army moves this way, I will have at least the satisfaction of beholding you, myself, at the head of the combined armies." In concluding his letter, he writes: "Adieu, my dear general. I heartily thank you for having ordered me to remain in Virginia; and to your goodness to me I am owing the most beautiful prospect I may ever behold."

The letter of Lafayette gave no account of the Count de Grasse, and Washington expressed himself distressed beyond measure to know what had become of that commander. He had heard of an English fleet at sea steering for the Chesapeake, and feared it might arrive and frustrate all the flattering prospects in that quarter. Still, as usual, he looked to the bright side. "Of many contingencies," writes he, "we will hope for the most propitious events. Should the retreat of Lord Cornwallis by water be cut off by the arrival of either of the French fleets, I am persuaded you will do all in your power to prevent his escape by land. May that great felicity be reserved for you."

Washington left Philadelphia on the 5th of September on his way to the Head of Elk. About three miles below Chester, he was met

by an express bearing tidings of the arrival of the Count de Grasse in the Chesapeake with twenty-eight ships of the line. Washington instantly rode back to Chester to rejoice with the Count de Rochambeau, who was coming down to that place from Philadelphia by water. They had a joyous dinner together, after which Washington proceeded in the evening on his destination.

The express meantime reached Philadelphia most opportunely. There had been a grand review of the French troops, at which the President of Congress and all the fashion of the city were present. It was followed by a banquet given to the officers by the French Minister, the Chevalier de Luzerne. Scarce were the company seated at table, when despatches came announcing the arrival of De Grasse and the landing of three thousand troops under the Marquis St. Simon, who, it was added, had opened a communication with Lafayette.

All now was mutual gratulation at the banquet. The news soon went forth and spread throughout the city. Acclamations were to be heard on all sides, and crowds assembling before the house of the French Minister rent the air with hearty huzzas for Louis the Sixteenth.

Washington reached the Head of Elk on the

6th. The troops and a great part of the stores were already arrived, and beginning to embark. Thence he wrote to the Count de Grasse, felicitating him on his arrival; and informing him that the van of the two armies were about to embark and fall down the Chesapeake, form a junction with the troops under the Count de St. Simon and the Marquis de Lafayette, and co-operate in blocking up Cornwallis in York River, so as to prevent his retreat by land or his getting any supplies from the country. "As it will be of the greatest importance," writes he, "to prevent the escape of his lordship from his present position, I am persuaded that every measure which prudence can dictate will be adopted for that purpose, until the arrival of our complete force, when I hope his lordship will be compelled to yield his ground to the superior power of our combined forces."

Everything had thus far gone on well, but there were not vessels enough at the Head of Elk for the immediate transportation of all the troops, ordnance, and stores; a part of the troops would have to proceed to Baltimore by land. Leaving General Heath to bring on the American forces, and the Baron de Viomenil the French, Washington, accompanied by De Rochambeau, crossed the Susquehanna early on the 8th, and pushed forward for Baltimore.

He was met by a deputation of the citizens, who made him a public address, to which he replied, and his arrival was celebrated in the evening with illuminations.

On the 9th he left Baltimore a little after daybreak, accompanied only by Colonel Humphreys; the rest of his suite were to follow at their ease; for himself, he was determined to reach Mount Vernon that evening. Six years had elapsed since last he was under its roof; six wearing years of toil, of danger, and of constant anxiety. During all that time, and amid all his military cares, he had kept up a regular weekly correspondence with his steward or agent, regulating all the affairs of his rural establishment with as much exactness as he did those of the army.

It was a late hour when he arrived at Mount Vernon; where he was joined by his suite at dinner-time on the following day, and by the Count de Rochambeau in the evening. General Chastellux and his aides-de-camp arrived there on the 11th, and Mount Vernon was now crowded with guests, who were all entertained in the ample style of old Virginian hospitality. On the 12th, tearing himself away once more from the home of his heart, Washington with his military associates continued onward to join Lafayette at Williamsburg.

Chapter XIX.

Cornwallis Aroused to his Danger—His Retreat to the Carolinas Cut off—Strengthens his Works—Action between the French and British Fleets—Washington and De Rochambeau Visit the French Fleet—Operations before Yorktown.

LORD CORNWALLIS had been completely roused from his dream of security by the appearance, on the 28th of August, of the fleet of Count de Grasse within the capes of the Delaware. Three French ships of the line and a frigate soon anchored at the mouth of York River. The boats of the fleet were immediately busy conveying three thousand three hundred land forces, under the Marquis de St. Simon, up James River to form the preconcerted junction with those under Lafayette.

Awakened to his danger, Cornwallis, as Washington had foreseen, meditated a retreat to the Carolinas. It was too late. York River

was blocked up by French ships; James River was filled with armed vessels covering the transportation of the troops. His lordship reconnoitered Williamsburg; it was too strong to be forced, and Wayne had crossed James River to join his troops to those under the marquis. Seeing his retreat cut off in every direction, Cornwallis proceeded to strengthen his works: sending off repeated expresses to apprise Sir Henry Clinton of his perilous situation.

The Count de Grasse, eager to return to the West Indies, urged Lafayette to make an immediate attack upon the British army, with the American and French troops under his command, without waiting for the combined force under Washington and Rochambeau, offering to aid him with marines and sailors from the ships. The admiral was seconded by the Marquis de St. Simon. They represented that the works at Yorktown were yet incomplete; and that that place and Gloucester, immediately opposite, might be carried by storm by their superior force. It was a brilliant achievement which they held out to tempt the youthful commander, but he remained undazzled. He would not, for the sake of personal distinction, lavish the lives of the brave men confided to him; but would await the

arrival of the combined forces, when success might be attained with little loss, and would leave to Washington the *coup de grace;* in all probability the closing triumph of the war.

The Count de Grasse had been but a few days anchored within the Chesapeake, and fifteen hundred of his seamen were absent, conveying the troops up James River, when Admiral Graves, who then commanded the British naval force on the American coast, appeared with twenty sail off the capes of Virginia. De Grasse, anxious to protect the squadron of the Count de Barras, which was expected from Rhode Island, and which it was the object of Graves to intercept, immediately slipped his cables and put to sea with twenty-four ships, leaving the rest to blockade York and James Rivers.

Washington received information of the sailing of the fleet from the capes, shortly after his departure from Mount Vernon, and instantly despatched missives, ordering the troops who were embarked at the Head of Elk to stop until the receipt of further intelligence, fearing that the navigation in Chesapeake Bay might not be secure. For two days he remained in anxious uncertainty, until, at Bowling Green, he was relieved by favorable rumors concerning the fleet, which were confirmed on his

arriving at Williamsburg on the evening of the 14th.

Admiral Graves, it appeared, on the sallying forth of the French fleet, immediately prepared for action, although he had five ships less than De Grasse. The latter, however, was not disposed to accept the challenge, his force being weakened by the absence of so many of his seamen, employed in transporting troops. His plan was to occupy the enemy by partial actions and skilful manœuvres, so as to retain his possession of the Chesapeake, and cover the arrival of De Barras.

The vans of the two fleets, and some ships of the centre, engaged about four o'clock in the afternoon of the 7th of September. The conflict soon became animated. Several ships were damaged, and many men killed and wounded on both sides.

De Grasse, who had the advantage of the wind, drew off after sunset; satisfied with the damage done and sustained, and not disposed for a general action; nor was the British admiral inclined to push the engagement so near night, and on a hostile coast. Among his ships that had suffered, one had been so severely handled, that she was no longer seaworthy, and had to be burnt. For four days the fleets remained in sight of each other, re-

pairing damages and manœuvring; but the French having still the advantage of the wind, maintained their prudent policy of avoiding a general engagement. At length De Grasse, learning that De Barras was arrived within the capes, formed a junction with him, and returned with him to his former anchoring ground, with two English frigates which he had captured. Admiral Graves, disappointed in his hope of intercepting De Barras, and finding the Chesapeake guarded by a superior force with which he could not prudently contend; having, moreover, to encounter the autumnal gales in the battered state of several of his ships, left the coast and bore away for New York. Under convoy of the squadron of De Barras came a fleet of transports, conveying land forces under M. de Choisy, with siege artillery and military stores. It should be mentioned to the credit of De Barras, that, in his orders from the French minister of marine to come to America, he was left at liberty to make a cruise on the banks of Newfoundland, so as not to be obliged to serve under De Grasse, who was his inferior in rank, but whom the minister wished to continue in the command. "But De Barras," writes Lafayette, "nobly took the part of conducting, himself, the artillery from Rhode Island, and of coming

with all his vessels and placing himself under the orders of an admiral his junior in service." *

From Williamsburg, Washington sent forward Count Fersen, one of the aides-de-camp of De Rochambeau, to hurry on the French troops with all possible despatch. He wrote to the same purport to General Lincoln: "Every day we now lose," said he, "is comparatively an age; as soon as it is in our power with safety, we ought to take our position near the enemy. Hurry on, then, my dear sir, with your troops, on the wings of speed. The want of our men and stores is now all that retards our immediate operations. Lord Cornwallis is improving every moment to the best advantage; and every day that is given him to make his preparations may cost us many lives to encounter them."

It was with great satisfaction Washington learned that Admiral de Barras had anticipated his wishes, in sending transports and prize vessels up the bay to assist in bringing on the French troops. In the meantime he with Count de Rochambeau was desirous of having an interview with the admiral on board of his ship, provided he could send some fast-sailing cutter to receive them. A small ship, the

* *Memoirs of Lafayette*, tom. i., p. 467.

Queen Charlotte, was furnished by the admiral for the purpose. It had been captured on its voyage from Charleston to New York, having Lord Rawdon on board, and had been commodiously fitted up for his lordship's reception.

On board of this vessel Washington and De Rochambeau, with the Chevalier de Chastellux and Generals Knox and Duportail, embarked on the 18th, and proceeding down James River, came the next morning in sight of the French fleet riding at anchor in Lynn Haven Bay, just under the point of Cape Henry. About noon they got alongside of the admiral's ship, the *Ville de Paris*, and were received on board with great ceremony, and naval and military parade. Admiral de Grasse was a tall, fine-looking man, plain in his address and prompt in the discharge of business. A plan of co-operation was soon arranged, to be carried into effect on the arrival of the American and French armies from the North, which were actually on their way down the Chesapeake from the Head of Elk. Business being despatched, dinner was served, after which they were conducted throughout the ship, and received the visits of the officers of the fleet, almost all of whom came on board.

About sunset Washington and his com-

panions took their leave of the admiral, and returned on board of their own little ship; when the yards of all the ships of the fleet were manned, and a parting salute was thundered from the *Ville de Paris*. Owing to storms and contrary winds, and other adverse circumstances, the party did not reach Williamsburg until the 22d, when intelligence was received that threatened to disconcert all the plans formed in the recent council on board ship. Admiral Digby, it appeared, had arrived in New York with six ships of the line and a reinforcement of troops. This intelligence Washington instantly transmitted to the Count de Grasse by one of the Count de Rochambeau's aides-de camp. De Grasse in reply expressed great concern, observing that the position of affairs was changed by the arrival of Digby. "The enemy," writes he, "is now nearly equal to us in strength, and it would be imprudent in me to place myself in a situation that would prevent my attacking them should they attempt to afford succor." He proposed, therefore, to leave two vessels at the mouth of York River, and the corvettes and frigates in James River, which, with the French troops on shore, would be sufficient assistance; and to put to sea with the rest, either to intercept the enemy and fight them where there was good sea-room,

or to blockade them in New York should they not have sailed.

On reading this letter, Washington dreaded that the present plan of co-operation might likewise fall through, and the fruits of all his schemes and combinations be lost when within his reach. With the assistance of the fleet the reduction of Yorktown was demonstrably certain, and the surrender of the garrison must go far to terminate the war; whereas the departure of the ships, by leaving an opening for succor to the enemy, might frustrate these brilliant prospects and involve the whole enterprise in ruin and disgrace. Even a momentary absence of the French fleet might enable Cornwallis to evacuate Yorktown and effect a retreat, with the loss merely of his baggage and artillery, and perhaps a few soldiers. These and other considerations were urged in a letter to the count, remonstrating against his putting to sea. Lafayette was the bearer of the letter, and seconded it with so many particulars respecting the situation of the armies, and argued the case so earnestly and eloquently, that the count consented to remain. It was, furthermore, determined in a council of war of his officers, that a large part of the fleet should anchor in York River; four or five vessels be stationed so as to pass up and down

James River, and a battery for cannon and mortars be erected with the aid of the allied troops on Point Comfort.

By the 25th the American and French troops were mostly arrived and encamped near Williamsburg, and preparations were made for the decisive blow.

Yorktown, as has already been noted, is situated on the south side of York River, immediately opposite Gloucester Point. Cornwallis had fortified the town with seven redoubts and six batteries on the land side connected by intrenchments; and there was a line of batteries along the river. The town was flanked on each side by deep ravines and creeks emptying into York River; their heads in front of the town, being not more than half a mile apart. The enemy had availed themselves of these natural defenses, in the arrangement of extensive outworks, with redoubts strengthened by abatis; field works mounted with cannon, and trees cut down and left with the branches pointed outward.

Gloucester Point had likewise been fortified —its batteries, with those of Yorktown, commanding the intervening river. Ships of war were likewise stationed on it, protected by the guns of the forts, and the channel was obstructed by sunken vessels.

The defense of Gloucester Point was confided to Lieutenant-Colonel Dundas, with six or seven hundred men. The enemy's main army was encamped about Yorktown, within the range of the outer redoubts and field works.

Washington and his staff bivouacked that night on the ground in the open air. He slept under a mulberry tree, the root serving for his pillow. On the following morning the two armies drew out on each side of Beaver Dam Creek. The Americans, forming the right wing, took station on the east side of the creek; the French, forming the left wing, on the west.

That evening Cornwallis received despatches from Sir Henry Clinton, informing him of the arrival of Admiral Digby, and that a fleet of twenty-three ships of the line, with about five thousand troops, would sail to his assistance probably on the 5th of October. A heavy firing would be made by them on arriving at the entrance of the Chesapeake. On hearing it, if all went on well at Yorktown, his lordship was to make three separate columns of smoke; and four, should he still possess the post at Gloucester Point.

Cornwallis immediately wrote in reply: "I have ventured these last two days to look General Washington's whole force in the face in the

position on the outside of my works, and have the pleasure to assure your Excellency, that there is but one wish throughout the army, which is that the enemy would advance. . . . I shall retire this night within the works, and have no doubt, if relief arrives in any reasonable time, York and Gloucester will be both in the possession of His Majesty's troops. I believe your Excellency must depend more on the sound of our cannon than the signal of smokes for information; however, I will attempt it on the Gloucester side." *

That night his lordship accordingly abandoned his outworks, and drew his troops within the town; a measure strongly censured by Tarleton in his Commentaries as premature; as cooping up the troops in narrow quarters, and giving up a means of disputing, inch by inch, the approaches of the besiegers, and thus gaining time to complete the fortifications of the town.

The outworks thus abandoned were seized upon the next morning by detachments of American light infantry and French troops, and served to cover the troops employed in throwing up breastworks. Colonel Alexander Scammel, officer of the day, while

* *Correspondence relative to Defense of York*, p. 199.

reconnoitering the ground abandoned by the enemy, was set upon by a party of Hessian troopers. He attempted to escape, but was wounded, captured, and carried off to Yorktown. Washington, to whom he had formerly acted as aide-de-camp, interested himself in his favor, and at his request Cornwallis permitted him to be removed to Williamsburg, where he died in the course of a few days. He was an officer of much merit, and his death was deeply regretted by Washington and the army.

The combined French and American forces were now twelve thousand strong, exclusive of the Virginia militia which Governor Nelson had brought into the field. An instance of patriotic self-devotion on the part of this functionary is worthy of special record. The treasury of Virginia was empty ; the governor, fearful that the militia would disband for want of pay, had endeavored to procure a loan from a wealthy individual on the credit of the State. In the precarious situation of affairs, the guarantee was not deemed sufficient. The governor pledged his own property, and obtained the loan at his individual risk.

On the morning of the 28th of September, the combined armies marched from Williamsburg toward Yorktown, about twelve miles distant, and encamped at night within two

miles of it, driving in the pickets and some patrols of cavalry. General de Choisy was sent across York River, with Lauzun's legion and General Weedon's brigade of militia, to watch the enemy on the side of Gloucester Point.

By the 1st of October the line of the besiegers, nearly two miles from the works, formed a semicircle, each end resting on the river, so that the investment by land was complete; while the Count de Grasse, with the main fleet, remained in Lynn Haven Bay, to keep off assistance by sea.

About this time the Americans threw up two redoubts in the night, which, on being discovered in the morning, were severely cannonaded. Three of the men were killed and several severely wounded. While Washington was superintending the works, a shot struck the ground close by him, throwing up a cloud of dust. The Rev. Mr. Evans, chaplain in the army, who was standing by him, was greatly agitated. Taking off his hat and showing it covered with sand, "See here, General," exclaimed he. "Mr. Evans," said Washington with grave pleasantry, "you had better carry that home, and show it to your wife and children." *

* Thacher's *Military Journal*, p. 336.

The besieged army began now to be greatly distressed for want of forage, and had to kill many of their horses, the carcasses of which were continually floating down the river. In the evening of the 2d of October, Tarleton with his legion and the mounted infantry were passed over the river to Gloucester Point, to assist in foraging. At daybreak Lieutenant-Colonel Dundas led out part of his garrison to forage the neighboring country. About ten o'clock the wagons and bat horses laden with Indian corn were returning, covered by a party of infantry, with Tarleton and his dragoons as a rear-guard. The wagons and infantry had nearly reached York River, when word was brought that the enemy was advancing in force. The report was confirmed by a cloud of dust, from which emerged Lauzun and the French hussars and lancers.

Tarleton, with part of his legion, advanced to meet them; the rest, with Simcoe's dragoons, remained as a rear-guard in a skirt of woods. A skirmish ensued, gallantly sustained on each side, but the superiority of Tarleton's horses gave him the advantage. General Choisy hastened up with a corps of cavalry and infantry to support the hussars. In the medley fight, a dragoon's horse, wounded by a lance, plunged, and overthrew both Tarleton

and his steed. The rear-guard rushed from their covert to rescue their commander. They came galloping up in such disorder, that they were roughly received by Lauzun's hussars, who were drawn up on the plain. In the meantime Tarleton scrambled out of the mêlée, mounted another horse, and ordered a retreat, to enable his men to recover from their confusion. Dismounting forty infantry, he placed them in a thicket. Their fire checked the hussars in their pursuit. The British dragoons rallied, and were about to charge; when the hussars retired behind their infantry; and a fire was opened upon the British by some militia from behind a fence. Tarleton again ordered a retreat to be sounded, and the conflict came to an end. The loss of the British in killed and wounded was one officer and eleven men; that of the French two officers and fourteen hussars. This was the last affair of Tarleton and his legion in the Revolutionary War.

The next day General Choisy, being reinforced by a detachment of marines from the fleet of De Grasse, cut off all communication by land between Gloucester and the country.

At this momentous time, when the first parallel before the besieged city was about to be opened, Washington received despatches

from his faithful coadjutor, General Greene, giving him important intelligence of his co-operations in the South; to consider which we will suspend for a moment our narrative of affairs before Yorktown

Chapter XX.

Greene on the High Hills of Santee—The Enemy Harassed—Greene Marches against Stuart—Battle Near Eutaw Springs.

FOR some weeks in the months of July and August, General Greene had remained encamped with his main force on the high hills of Santee, refreshing and disciplining his men, and awaiting the arrival of promised reinforcements. He was constantly looking to Washington as his polar star by which to steer, and feared despatches from him had been intercepted. "I wait with impatience for intelligence," said he, "by which I mean to govern my own operations. If things are flattering in the North, I will hazard less in the South; but, if otherwise there, we must risk more here." In the meantime, Marion with his light troops, aided by Colonel Washington with his dragoons, held control over the lower Santee. Lee was

detached to operate with Sumter's brigade on the Congaree, and Colonel Harden with his mounted militia was scouring the country about the Edisto. The enemy was thus harassed in every quarter; their convoys and foraging parties waylaid, and Stuart was obliged to obtain all his supplies from below.

Greene was disappointed as to reinforcements. All that he received were two hundred North Carolina levies and five hundred South Carolina militia; still he prepared for a bold effort to drive the enemy from their remaining posts. For that purpose, on the 22d of August he broke up his encampment on the "benign hills of Santee," to march against Colonel Stuart. The latter still lay encamped about sixteen miles distant in a straight line; but the Congaree and Wateree lay between, bordered by swamps overflowed by recent rains; to cross them and reach the hostile camp, it was necessary to make a circuit of seventy miles. While Greene was making it, Stuart abandoned his position, and moved down forty miles to the vicinity of Eutaw Springs, where he was reinforced by a detachment from Charleston with provisions.

Greene followed on by easy marches. He had been joined by General Pickens with a party of the Ninety-Six militia, and by the State

troops under Lieutenant-Colonel Henderson; and now moved slowly to give time for Marion, who was scouring the country about the Edisto, to rejoin him. This was done on the 5th of September at Laurens's place, within seventeen miles of Stuart's camp. Here baggage, tents, everything that could impede motion, was left behind, and on the afternoon of the 7th the army was pushed on within seven miles of the Eutaws, where it bivouacked for the night, Greene lying on the ground wrapped in his cloak, with the root of a tree for a pillow.

At four o'clock in the morning his little army was in motion. His whole force at that time did not exceed two thousand men; that of the enemy he was seeking, about twenty-three hundred. The Americans, however, were superior in cavalry. Owing to the difficulty of receiving information, and the country being covered with forests, the enemy were not aware of Greene's approach until he was close upon them.

His army advanced in two columns, which were to form the two lines of battle. The first column, commanded by General Marion, was composed of two battalions of North and two of South Carolina militia, the second column of three brigades; one of North Carolina, one of Virginia, and one of Maryland continental

troops. Colonel Lee with his legion covered the right flank, Colonel Henderson the left. Colonel Washington, with his dragoons and the Delaware troops, formed the reserve. Each column had two field pieces.

Within four miles of Eutaw they met with a British detachment of one hundred and fifty infantry and fifty cavalry under Major Coffin, sent forward to reconnoiter; it was put to flight after a severe skirmish, in which a number were killed and wounded, and several taken prisoners. Supposing this to be the van of the enemy, Greene halted his columns and formed. The South Carolinians in equal divisions formed the right and left of the first line, the North Carolinians the centre. General Marion commanded the right; General Pickens, the left; Colonel Malmedy, the centre. Colonel Henderson with the State troops covered the left of the line; Colonel Lee with his legion, the right.

Of the second line, composed of regulars, the North Carolinians, under General Sumner, were on the right; the Marylanders, under Colonel Williams, on the left; the Virginians, under Colonel Campbell, in the centre.

Colonel Washington with his cavalry followed in the rear as a *corps de reserve*.

Two three-pounders moved on the road in

the centre of the first line. Two six-pounders in a like position in the second line.

In this order the troops moved forward, keeping their lines as well as they could through open woods, which covered the country on each side of the road.

Within a mile of the camp they encountered a body of infantry thrown forward by Colonel Stuart, to check their advance while he had time to form his troops in order of battle. These were drawn up in line in a wood two hundred yards west of Eutaw Springs. The right rested on Eutaw Creek (or brook), and was covered by a battalion of grenadiers and infantry under Major Majoribanks, partly concealed among thickets on the margin of the stream. The left of the line extended across the Charleston road, with a reserve corps in a commanding situation covering the road. About fifty yards in the rear of the British line was a cleared field, in which was their encampment, with the tents all standing. Adjoining it was a brick house with a palisadoed garden which Colonel Stuart intended as a protection, if too much pressed by cavalry.

The advanced party of infantry, which had retired firing before the Americans, formed on the flanks of Colonel Stuart's line. The Carolinian militia had pressed after them. About

nine o'clock the action was commenced by the left of the American line, and soon became general. The militia fought for a time with the spirit and firmness of regulars. Their two field pieces were dismounted; so was one of the enemy's; and there was great carnage on both sides. The militia fought until they had expended seventeen rounds, when they gave way, covered by Lee and Henderson, who fought bravely on the flanks on the line.

Sumner, with the regulars who formed the second line, advanced in fine style to take the place of the first. The enemy likewise brought their reserve into action; the conflict continued to be bloody and severe. Colonel Henderson, who commanded the State troops in the second line, was severely wounded; this caused some confusion. Sumner's brigade, formed partly of recruits, gave way under the superior fire of the enemy. The British rushed forward to secure their fancied victory. Greene, seeing their line disordered, instantly ordered Williams with his Marylanders to "sweep the field with the bayonet." Williams was seconded by Colonel Campbell with the Virginians. The order was gallantly obeyed. They delivered a deadly volley at forty yards' distance, and then advanced at a brisk rate, with loud shouts and trailed arms, prepared to

make the deadly thrust. The British recoiled. While the Marylanders and Virginians attacked them in front, Lee with his legion turned their left flank and charged them in rear. Colonel Hampton with the State cavalry made a great number of prisoners, and Colonel Washington, coming up with his reserve of horse and foot, completed their defeat. They were driven back through their camp; many were captured; many fled along the Charleston road, and others threw themselves into the brick house.

Major Majoribanks and his troops could still enfilade the left flank of the Americans from their covert among the thickets on the border of the stream. Greene ordered Colonel Washington with his dragoons and Kirkwood's Delaware infantry to dislodge them, and Colonel Wade Hampton to assist with the State troops. Colonel Washington, without waiting for the infantry, dashed forward with his dragoons. It was a rash move. The thickets were impervious to cavalry. The dragoons separated into small squads, and endeavored to force their way in. Horses and riders were shot down or bayoneted; most of the officers were either killed or wounded. Colonel Washington had his horse shot under him; he himself was bayoneted, and would have been

slain, had not a British officer interposed, who took him prisoner.

By the time Hampton and Kirkwood came up, the cavalry were routed; the ground was strewed with the dead and wounded; horses were plunging and struggling in the agonies of death; others were galloping about without their riders. While Hampton rallied the scattered cavalry, Kirkwood with his Delawares charged with bayonets upon the enemy in the thicket. Marjoribanks fell back with his troops and made a stand in the palisadoed garden of the brick house.

Victory now seemed certain on the side of the Americans. They had driven the British from the field, and had taken possession of their camp; unfortunately, the soldiers, thinking the day their own, fell to plundering the tents, devouring the food and carousing on the liquors found there. Many of them became intoxicated and unmanageable—the officers interfered in vain; all was riot and disorder.

The enemy in the meantime recovered from their confusion and opened a fire from every window of the house and from the palisadoed garden. There was a scattering fire also from the woods and thickets on the right and left. Four cannon, one of which had been captured from the enemy, were now advanced by the

Americans to batter the house. The fire from the windows was so severe, that most of the officers and men who served the cannon were either killed or wounded. Greene ordered the survivors to retire; they did so, leaving the cannon behind.

Colonel Stuart was by this time rallying his left wing, and advancing to support the right; when Greene, finding his ammunition nearly exhausted, determined to give up the attempt to dislodge the enemy from their places of refuge, since he could not do it without severe loss; whereas the enemy could maintain their posts but a few hours, and he should have a better opportunity of attacking them on their retreat.

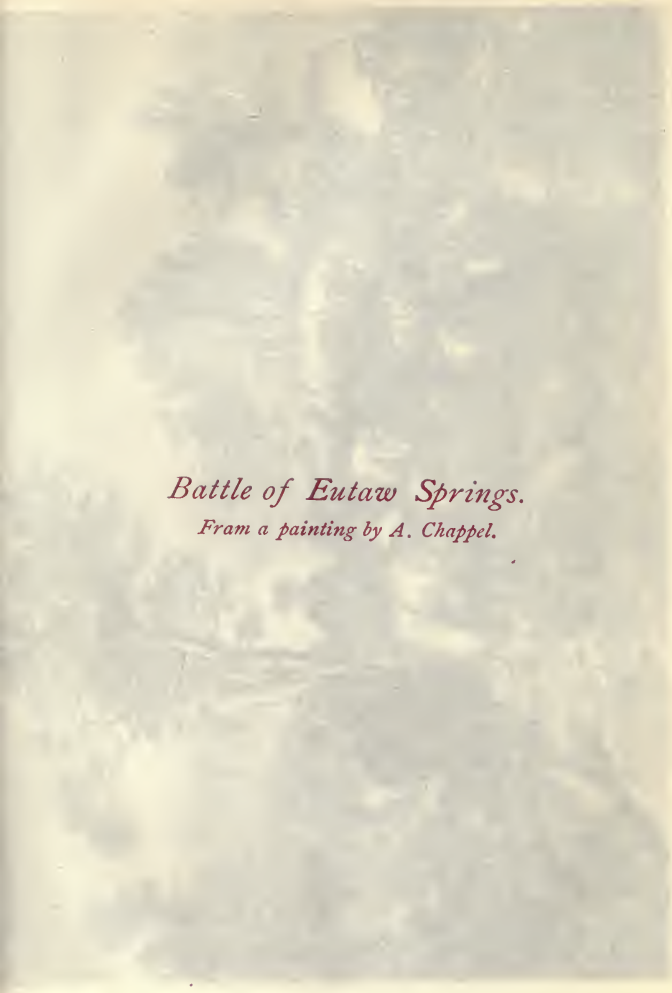
He remained on the ground long enough to collect his wounded, excepting those who were too much under the fire of the house, and then, leaving Colonel Hampton with a strong picket on the field, he returned to the position seven miles off which he had left in the morning; not finding water anywhere nearer.

The enemy decamped in the night, after destroying a large quantity of provisions, staving many barrels of rum, and breaking upwards of a thousand stand of arms which they threw into the springs of the Eutaw; they left behind also seventy of their wounded who

might have impeded the celerity of their retreat. Their loss in killed, wounded, and captured, in this action, was six hundred and thirty-three, of whom five hundred were prisoners in the hands of the Americans; the loss sustained, by the latter in killed, wounded, and missing, was five hundred and thirty-five. One of the slain most deplored was Colonel Campbell, who had so bravely led on the Virginians. He fell in the shock of the charge with the bayonet. It was a glorious close of a gallant career. In his dying moments he was told of the defeat of the enemy, and is said to have uttered the celebrated ejaculation of General Wolfe, "I die contented."

In the morning, General Greene, who knew not that the enemy had decamped, detached Lee and Marion to scour the country between Eutaw Springs and Charleston, to intercept any reinforcements which might be coming to Colonel Stuart, and to retard the march of the latter should he be retreating. Stuart, however, had met with reinforcements about fourteen miles from Eutaw, but continued his retreat to Monk's Corner, within twenty-five miles of Charleston.

Greene, when informed of the retreat, had followed with his main force almost to Monk's Corner; finding the number and position of



Battle of Eutaw Springs.

Fram a painting by A. Chappel.

Battle of Bunker Hill.

From a Painting by A. Chappel.

the enemy too strong to be attacked with prudence, he fell back to Eutaw, where he remained a day or two to rest his troops, and then returned by easy marches to his old position near the heights of Santee.

Thence, as usual, he despatched an account of affairs to Washington. "Since I wrote to you before, we have had a most bloody battle. It was by far the most obstinate fight I ever saw. Victory was ours; and had it not been for one of those little incidents which frequently happen in the progress of war, we should have taken the whole British army. . . . I am trying to collect a body of militia to oppose Lord Cornwallis should he attempt to escape through North Carolina to Charleston. Charleston itself may be reduced, if you will bend your forces this way, and it will give me great pleasure to join your Excellency in the attempt; for I shall be equally happy, whether as a principal or subordinate, so that the public good is promoted."

Such was the purport of the intelligence received from Greene. Washington considered the affair at Eutaw Springs a victory, and sent Greene his congratulations. "Fortune," writes he, "must have been coy indeed, had she not yielded at last to so persevering a pursuer as you have been.

"I can say with sincerity, that I feel with the highest degree of pleasure the good effects which you mention as resulting from the perfect good understanding between you, the marquis, and myself. I hope it will never be interrupted, and I am sure it never can be while we are all influenced by the same pure motive, that of love to our country and interest in the cause in which we are embarked."

We will now resume our narrative of the siege of Yorktown.

Chapter XXII.

Siege and Surrender of Yorktown.

GENERAL LINCOLN had the honor, on the night of the 6th of October, 1781, of opening the first parallel before Yorktown. It was within six hundred yards of the enemy; nearly two miles in extent, and the foundations were laid for two redoubts. He had under him a large detachment of French and American troops, and the work was conducted with such silence and secrecy in a night of extreme darkness, that the enemy were not aware of it until daylight. A severe cannonade was then opened from the fortifications; but the men were under cover and continued working—the greatest emulation and good-will prevailing between the officers and soldiers of the allied armies thus engaged.

By the afternoon of the 9th the parallel was completed, and two or three batteries were

ready to fire upon the town. "General Washington put the match to the first gun," says an observer who was present; "a furious discharge of cannon and mortars immediately followed, and Earl Cornwallis received his first salutation." *

Governor Nelson, who had so nobly pledged his own property to raise funds for the public service, gave another proof of his self-sacrificing patriotism on this occasion. He was asked which part of the town could be most effectively cannonaded. He pointed to a large handsome house on a rising ground as the probable headquarters of the enemy. It proved to be his own. †

The governor had an uncle in the town, very old, and afflicted with the gout. He had been for thirty years secretary under the royal colonial government, and was still called Mr. Secretary Nelson. He had taken no part in the Revolution, unfitted, perhaps, for the struggle, by his advanced age and his infirmities; and had remained in Yorktown when taken possession of by the English, not having any personal enmity to apprehend from them. He had two sons in Washington's army, who

* Thacher's *Military Journal.*

† Given on the authority of Lafayette. Sparks, viii., 201.

now were in the utmost alarm for his safety. At their request Washington sent in a flag, desiring that their father might be permitted to leave the place. "I was a witness," writes the Count de Chastellux in his memoirs, "of the cruel anxiety of one of those young men, as he kept his eyes fixed upon the gate of the town by which the flag would come out. It seemed as if he were awaiting his own sentence in the reply that was to be received. Lord Cornwallis had not the inhumanity to refuse so just a request."

The appearance of the venerable secretary, his stately person, noble countenance, and gray hairs, commanded respect and veneration. "I can never recall without emotion," writes the susceptible count, "his arrival at the head-quarters of General Washington. He was seated, his attack of the gout still continuing, and while we stood around him, he related with a serene visage what had been the effect of our batteries." *

His house had received some of the first shots; one of his negroes had been killed, and the headquarters of Lord Cornwallis had been so battered, that he had been driven out of them.

The cannonade was kept up almost inces-

* Chastellux, vol. ii., pp. 19-83.

santly for three or four days from the batteries above mentioned, and from three others managed by the French. "Being in the trenches every other night and day," writes an observer already quoted,* "I have a fine opportunity of witnessing the sublime and stupendous scene which is continually exhibiting. The bomb-shells from the besiegers and the besieged are incessantly crossing each other's path in the air. They are clearly visible in the form of a black ball in the day, but in the night they appear like a fiery meteor with a blazing tail, most beautifully brilliant, ascending majestically from the mortar to a certain altitude, and gradually descending to the spot where they are destined to execute their work of destruction. When a shell falls, it whirls round, burrows and excavates the earth to a considerable extent, and, bursting, makes dreadful havoc around." "Some of our shells, over-reaching the town, are seen to fall into the river, and bursting, throw up columns of water like the spouting monsters of the deep."

The half-finished works of the enemy suffered severely, the guns were dismounted or silenced, and many men killed. The red-hot shot from the French batteries northwest of the town reached the English shipping. The *Charon*, a

* Thacher.

forty-four gunship, and three large transports, were set on fire by them. The flames ran up the rigging to the tops of the masts. The conflagration, seen in the darkness of the night, with the accompanying flash and thundering of cannon, and soaring and bursting of shells, and the tremendous explosions of the ships, all presented a scene of mingled magnificence and horror.

On the night of the 11th the second parallel was opened by the Baron Steuben's division, within three hundred yards of the works. The British now made new embrasures, and for two or three days kept up a galling fire upon those at work. The latter were still more annoyed by the flanking fire of two redoubts three hundred yards in front of the British works. As they enfiladed the entrenchments, and were supposed also to command the communication between Yorktown and Gloucester, it was resolved to storm them both, on the night of the 14th; the one nearest the river by a detachment of Americans commanded by Lafayette; the other by a French detachment led by the Baron de Viomenil. The grenadiers of the regiment of Gatinais were to be at the head of the French detachment. This regiment had been formed out of that of Auvergne, of which De Rochambeau had been colonel, and which, by its brave and honorable conduct, had won the

appellation of the regiment *D'Auvergne sans tache* (Auvergne without a stain). When De Rochambeau assigned the Gatinais grenadiers their post in the attack, he addressed to them a few soldier-like words. "My lads, I have need of you this night, and hope you will not forget that we have served together in that brave regiment of *Auvergne sans tache.*" They instantly replied, that if he would promise to get their old name restored to them, they would sacrifice themselves to the last man. The promise was given.

In the arrangement for the American assault, Lafayette had given the honor of leading the advance to his own aide-de-camp, Lieutenant-Colonel Gimat. This instantly touched the military pride of Hamilton, who exclaimed against it as an unjust preference, it being his tour of duty. The marquis excused himself by alleging the arrangement had been sanctioned by the commander-in-chief, and could not be changed by him. Hamilton forthwith made a spirited appeal by letter to Washington. The latter, who was ignorant of the circumstances of the case, sent for the marquis, and, finding that it really was Hamilton's tour of duty, directed that he should be reinstated in it, which was done.* It was therefore arranged

* Lee's *Memoirs of the War*, ii., 342.

that Colonel Gimat's battalion should lead the van, and be followed by that of Hamilton, and that the latter should command the whole advanced corps.*

About eight o'clock in the evening rockets were sent up as signals for the simultaneous attack. Hamilton, to his great joy, led the advance of the Americans. The men, without waiting for the sappers to demolish the abatis in regular style, pushed them aside or pulled them down with their hands, and scrambled over, like rough bush-fighters. Hamilton was the first to mount the parapet, placing one foot on the shoulder of a soldier, who knelt on one knee for the purpose.† The men mounted after him. Not a musket was fired. The redoubt was carried at the point of the bayonet. The loss of the Americans was one sergeant and eight privates killed, seven officers and twenty-five non-commissioned officers and privates wounded. The loss of the enemy was eight killed and seventeen taken prisoners. Among the latter was Major Campbell, who had commanded the redoubt. A New Hampshire captain of artillery would have taken his life in revenge of the death of his favorite Colonel

* Lafayette to Washington. *Correspondence of the Rev.*, iii., 426.

† Leake's *Life of John Lamb*, p. 259.

Scammel, but Colonel Hamilton prevented him. Not a man was killed after he ceased to resist.*

The French stormed the other redoubt, which was more strongly garrisoned, with equal gallantry, but less precipitation. They proceeded according to rule. The soldiers paused while the sappers removed the abatis, during which time they were exposed to a destructive fire, and lost more men than did the Americans in their headlong attack. As the Baron de Viomenil, who led the party, was thus waiting, Major Barbour, Lafayette's aide-de-camp, came through the tremendous fire of the enemy, with a message from the marquis, letting him know that he was in his redoubt, and wished to know where the baron was. "Tell the marquis," replied the latter, "that I am not in mine, but will be in it in five minutes."

* Thacher, p. 341.

N. B.—Gordon, in his history of the war, asserts that Lafayette, with the consent of Washington, ordered that, in capturing the redoubt, no quarter should be shown; in retaliation of a massacre perpetrated at Fort Griswold. It is needless to contradict a statement so opposed to the characters of both. It has been denied by both Lafayette and Hamilton. Not one of the enemy was killed unless in action.

The abatis being removed, the troops rushed to the assault. The Chevalier de Lameth, Lafayette's adjutant-general, was the first to mount the parapet of the redoubt, and received a volley at arms' length from the Hessians who manned it. Shot through both knees, he fell back into the ditch, and was conveyed away under care of his friend, the Count de Dumas. The Count de Deuxponts, leading on the royal grenadiers of the same name, was likewise wounded.

The grenadiers of the Gatinais regiment remembered the promise of De Rochambeau, and fought with true Gallic fire. One third of them were slain, and among them Captain de Sireuil, a valiant officer of chasseurs; but the regiment by its bravery on this occasion regained from the king its proud name of the *Royal Auvergne*.

Washington was an intensely excited spectator of these assaults, on the result of which so much depended. He had dismounted, given his horse to a servant, and taken his stand in the grand battery with Generals Knox and Lincoln and their staffs. The risk he ran of a chance shot, while watching the attack through an embrasure, made those about him uneasy. One of his aides-de-camp ventured to observe that the situation was very much exposed.

"If you think so," replied he gravely, "you are at liberty to step back."

Shortly afterwards a musket ball struck the cannon in the embrasure, rolled along it, and fell at his feet. General Knox grasped his arm. "My dear general," exclaimed he, "we can't spare you yet." "It is a spent ball," replied Washington quietly; "no harm is done."

When all was over and the redoubts were taken, he drew a long breath, and turning to Knox, observed, "The work is done, *and well done!*" Then called to his servant, "William, bring me my horse."

In his despatches he declared that in these assaults nothing could exceed the firmness and bravery of the troops. Lafayette also testified to the conduct of Colonel Hamilton, "whose well-known talents and gallantry," writes he, "were on this occasion most conspicuous and serviceable." *

The redoubts thus taken were included the same night in the second parallel, and howitzers were mounted upon them the following day. The capture of them reduced Lord Cornwallis almost to despair. Writing that same day to Sir Henry Clinton, he observes: "My situation

* Lafayette to Washington. *Cor. of the Rev.*, iii., 426.

now becomes very critical; we dare not show a gun to their old batteries, and I expect that their new ones will open to-morrow morning. . . . The safety of the place is, therefore, so precarious, that I cannot recommend that the fleet and army should run great risk in endeavoring to save us,"—a generous abnegation of self on the part of the beleaguered commander. Had the fleet and army sailed, as he had been given to expect, about the 5th of October, they might have arrived in time to save his lordship; but at the date of the above letter they were still lingering in port. Delay of naval succor was fatal to British operations in this war.

The second parallel was now nearly ready to open. Cornwallis dreaded the effect of its batteries on his almost dismantled works. To retard the danger as much as possible, he ordered an attack on two of the batteries that were in the greatest state of forwardness, their guns to be spiked. It was made a little before daybreak of the 16th, by about three hundred and fifty men, under the direction of Lieutenant-Colonel Abercrombie. He divided his forces; a detachment of guards and a company of grenadiers attacked one battery, and a corps of light infantry the other.

The redoubts which covered the batteries

were forced in gallant style, and several pieces of artillery spiked. By this time the supporting troops from the trenches came up, and the enemy were obliged to retreat, leaving behind them seven or eight dead and six prisoners. The French, who had guard of this part of the trenches, had four officers and twelve privates killed or wounded, and the Americans lost one sergeant. The mischief had been done too hastily. The spikes were easily extracted, and before evening all the batteries and the parallel were nearly complete.

At this time the garrison could not show a gun on the side of the works exposed to attack, and the shells were nearly expended; the place was no longer tenable. Rather than surrender, Cornwallis determined to attempt an escape. His plan was to leave his sick and wounded and his baggage behind, cross over in the night to Gloucester Point, attack Choisy's camp before daybreak, mount his infantry on the captured cavalry horses, and on such other as could be collected on the road, push for the upper country by rapid marches until opposite the fords of the great rivers, then turn suddenly northward, force his way through Maryland, Pennsylvania, and the Jerseys, and join Sir Henry Clinton in New York.

It was a wild and daring scheme, but his

situation was desperate, and the idea of surrender intolerable.

In pursuance of this design, sixteen large boats were secretly prepared; a detachment was appointed to remain and capitulate for the town's people, the sick and the wounded; a large part of the troops were transported to the Gloucester side of the river before midnight, and the second division had actually embarked, when a violent storm of wind and rain scattered the boats, and drove them a considerable distance down the river. They were collected with difficulty. It was now too late to effect the passage of the second division before daybreak, and an effort was made to get back the division which had already crossed. It was not done until the morning was far advanced, and the troops in recrossing were exposed to the fire of the American batteries.

The hopes of Lord Cornwallis were now at an end. His works were tumbling in ruins about him, under an incessant cannonade; his garrison was reduced in number by sickness and death, and exhausted by constant watching and severe duty. Unwilling to expose the residue of the brave troops which had stood by him so faithfully, to the dangers and horrors of an assault, which could not fail to be successful, he ordered a parley to be beaten

about ten o'clock on the morning of the 17th, and despatched a flag with a letter to Washton proposing a cessation of hostilities for twenty-four hours, and that two officers might be appointed by each side to meet and settle terms for the surrender of the posts of Yorktown and Gloucester.

Washington felt unwilling to grant such delay, when reinforcements might be on the way for Cornwallis from New York. In reply, therefore, he requested that, previous to the meeting of commissioners, his lordship's proposals might be sent in writing to the American lines, for which purpose a suspension of hostilities during two hours from the delivery of the letter, would be granted. This was complied with; but as the proposals offered by Cornwallis were not all admissible, Washington drew up a schedule of such terms as he would grant, and transmitted it to his lordship.

The armistice was prolonged. Commissioners met, the Viscount de Noailles and Lieutenant-Colonel Laurens on the part of the allies; Colonel Dundas and Major Ross on the part of the British. After much discussion, a rough draft was made of the terms of capitulation to be submitted to the British general. These Washington caused to be

promptly transcribed, and sent to Lord Cornwallis early in the morning of the 19th, with a note expressing his expectation that they would be signed by eleven o'clock, and that the garrison would be ready to march out by two o'clock in the afternoon. Lord Cornwallis was fain to comply, and, accordingly, on the same day, the posts of Yorktown and Gloucester were surrendered to General Washington as commander-in-chief of the combined army; and the ships of war, transports, and other vessels, to the Count de Grasse, as commander of the French fleet. The garrison of Yorktown and Gloucester, including the officers of the navy and seamen of every denomination, were to surrender as prisoners of war to the combined army; the land force to remain prisoners to the United States, the seamen to the King of France.

The garrison was to be allowed the same honors granted to the garrison of Charleston when it surrendered to Sir Henry Clinton. The officers were to retain their side arms; both officers and soldiers their private property, and no part of their baggage or papers was to be subject to search or inspection. The soldiers were to be kept in Virginia, Maryland, or Pennsylvania, as much by regiments as possible, and supplied with the same rations of

provisions as the American soldiers. The officers were to be permitted to proceed, upon parole, to Europe or to any maritime port on the continent of America in possession of British troops. The *Bonetta* sloop-of-war was to be at the disposal of Lord Cornwallis ; to convey an aide-de-camp, with despatches to Sir Henry Clinton, with such soldiers as he might think proper to send to New York, and was to sail without examination. (We will here observe that in this vessel, thus protected from scrutiny, a number of royalists, whose conduct had rendered them peculiarly odious to their countrymen, privately took their departure.)

It was arranged in the allied camp that General Lincoln should receive the submission of the royal army, precisely in the manner in which the submission of his own army had been received on the surrender of Charleston. An eye-witness has given us a graphic description of the ceremony.*

* The number of prisoners made by the above capitulation amounted to 7073, of whom 5950 were rank and file ; six commissioned and twenty-eight non-commissioned officers and privates, had previously been captured in the two redoubts, or in the sortie of the garrison. The loss sustained by the garrison during the siege, in killed, wounded, and missing, amounted to 552. That of the combined army in killed was about 300. The combined army to which Cornwallis

"At about twelve o'clock the combined army was drawn up in two lines more than a mile in length, the Americans on the right side of the road, the French on their left. Washington, mounted on a noble steed, and attended by his staff, was in front of the former; the Count de Rochambeau and his suite, of the latter. The French troops in complete uniform, and well equipped, made a brilliant appearance, and had marched to the ground with a band of music playing, which was a novelty in the American service. The American troops, but part in uniform, and all in garments much the worse for wear, yet had a spirited, soldier-like air, and were not the worse in the eyes of their countrymen for bearing the marks of hard service and great privations. The concourse of spectators from the country seemed equal in number to the military, yet silence and order prevailed.

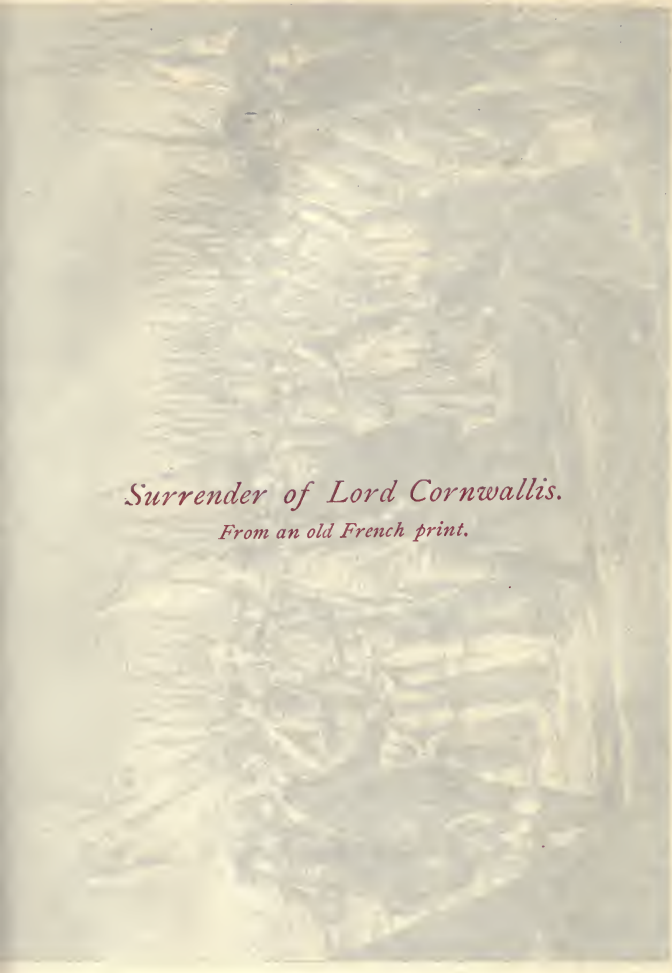
"About two o'clock the garrison sallied forth, and passed through with shouldered arms, slow and solemn steps, colors cased, and drums beating a British march. They were all well clad, having been furnished with new suits prior to the capitulation. They

surrendered, was estimated at 16,000, of whom 7000, were French, 5500, Continentals, and 3500 militia. —*Holmes's Annals*, vol. ii., p. 333.

were led by General O'Hara on horseback, who, on riding up to General Washington, took off his hat and apologized for the non-appearance of Lord Cornwallis, on account of indisposition. Washington received him with dignified courtesy, but pointed to Major-General Lincoln as the officer who was to receive the submission of the garrison. By him they were conducted into a field where they were to ground their arms. In passing through the line formed by the allied army, their march was careless and irregular, and their aspect sullen, the order to 'ground arms' was given by their platoon officer with a tone of deep chagrin, and many of the soldiers threw down their muskets with a violence sufficient to break them. This irregularity was checked by General Lincoln; yet it was excusable in brave men in their unfortunate predicament. This ceremony over, they were conducted back to Yorktown to remain under guard until removed to their places of destination." *

On the following morning, Washington in general orders congratulated the allied armies on the recent victory, awarding high praise to the officers and troops both French and American, for their conduct during the siege, and specifying by name several of the generals and

*Thacher, p. 346.



Surrender of Lord Cornwallis.

From an old French print.

other officers who had especially distinguished themselves. All those of his army who were under arrest, were pardoned and set at liberty. "Divine service," it was added, "is to be performed to-morrow in the several brigades and divisions. The commander-in-chief earnestly recommends that the troops, not on duty, should universally attend, with that seriousness of deportment and gratitude of heart which the recognition of such reiterated and astonishing interpositions of Providence demand of us."

Cornwallis felt deeply the humiliation of this close to all his wide and wild campaigning, and was made more sensitive on the subject by circumstances of which he soon became apprised. On the very day that he had been compelled to lay down his arms before Yorktown, the lingering armament intended for his relief sailed from New York. It consisted of twenty-five ships of the line, two fifty-gun ships, and eight frigates; with Sir Henry Clinton and seven thousand of his best troops. Sir Henry arrived off the Capes of Virginia on the 24th, and gathered information which led him to apprehend that Lord Cornwallis had capitulated. He hovered off the mouth of the Chesapeake until the 29th, when, having fully ascertained that he had come too late, he turned his tardy prows toward New York.

Cornwallis, in a letter written subsequently, renders the following testimony to the conduct of his captors: "The treatment, in general, that we have received from the enemy since our surrender has been perfectly good and proper; but the kindness and attention that has been shown to us by the French officers in particular, their delicate sensibility of our situation, their generous and pressing offer of money, both public and private, to any amount, has really gone beyond what I can possibly describe, and will, I hope, make an impression in the breast of every officer, whenever the fortune of war shall put any of them into our power."

In the meantime, the rejoicings which Washington had commenced with appropriate solemnities in the victorious camp, had spread throughout the Union. "Cornwallis is taken!" was the universal acclaim. It was considered a death-blow to the war.

Congress gave way to transports of joy. Thanks were voted to the commander-in-chief, to the Counts de Rochambeau and De Grasse, to the officers of the allied armies generally, and to the corps of artillery and engineers especially. Two stands of colors, trophies of the capitulation, were voted to Washington, two pieces of field ordnance to De Rochambeau

and De Grasse; and it was decreed that a marble column, commemorative of the alliance between France and the United States, and of the victory achieved by their associated arms, should be erected in Yorktown. Finally, Congress issued a proclamation, appointing a day for general thanksgiving and prayer, in acknowledgment of this signal interposition of Divine Providence.

Far different was the feeling of the British ministry when news of the event reached the other side of the Atlantic. Lord George Germaine was the first to announce it to Lord North at his office in Downing Street. "And how did he take it?" was the inquiry. "As he would have taken a ball in the breast," replied Lord George, "for he opened his arms, exclaiming wildly as he paced up and down the apartment, 'O God! it is all over!'"*

* Wraxall's *Historical Memoirs*, vol. ii., p. 99.

Chapter XXIII.

Dissolution of the Combined Armies—Washington at Eltham—Death of John Parke Custis—Washington at Mount Vernon—Correspondence about the Next Campaign—Lafayette Sails for France—Washington Stimulates Congress to Military Preparations—Project to Surprise and Carry off Prince William Henry from New York—The Case of Captain Asgill.

WASHINGTON would have followed up the reduction of Yorktown by a combined operation against Charleston, and addressed a letter to the Count de Grasse on the subject, but the count alleged in reply that the orders of his court, ulterior projects, and his engagements with the Spaniards, rendered it impossible to remain the necessary time for the operation.

The prosecution of the Southern war, therefore, upon the broad scale which Washington had contemplated, had to be relinquished; for without shipping and a convoy, the troops and everything necessary for a siege would have to

be transported by land with immense trouble, expense, and delay; while the enemy, by means of their fleets, could reinforce or withdraw the garrison at pleasure.

Under these circumstances, Washington had to content himself, for the present, with detaching two thousand Pennsylvania, Maryland, and Virginia continental troops, under General St. Clair, for the support of General Greene, trusting that, with this aid, he would be able to command the interior of South Carolina, and confine the enemy to the town of Charleston.

A dissolution of the combined forces now took place. The Marquis St. Simon embarked his troops on the last of October, and the Count de Grasse made sail on the 4th of November, taking with him two beautiful horses which Washington had presented to him in token of cordial regard.

Lafayette, seeing there was no probability of further active service in the present year, resolved to return to France on a visit to his family, and, with Washington's approbation, set out for Philadelphia to obtain leave of absence from Congress.

The British prisoners were marched to Winchester in Virginia, and Fredrickstown in Maryland, and Lord Cornwallis and his principal officers sailed for New York on parole.

The main part of the American army embarked for the Head of Elk, and returned northward under the command of General Lincoln, to be cantoned for the winter in the Jerseys and on the Hudson, so as to be ready for operations against New York, or elsewhere, in the next year's campaign.

The French army were to remain for the winter, in Virginia, and the Count de Rochambeau established his headquarters at Williamsburg.

Having attended in person to the distribution of ordnance and stores, the departure of prisoners, and the embarkation of the troops under Lincoln, Washington left Yorktown on the 5th of November, and arrived the same day at Eltham, the seat of his friend Colonel Bassett. He arrived just in time to receive the last breath of John Parke Custis, the son of Mrs. Washington, as he had, several years previously, rendered tender and pious offices at the death-bed of his sister, Miss Custis. The deceased had been an object of Washington's care from childhood, and been cherished by him with paternal affection. Formed under his guidance and instructions, he had been fitted to take a part in the public concerns of his country, and had acquitted himself with credit as a member of the Virginia Legislature.

He was but twenty-eight years old at the time of his death, and left a widow and four young children. It was an unexpected event, and the dying scene was rendered peculiarly affecting from the presence of the mother and wife of the deceased. Washington remained several days at Eltham to comfort them in their afflictions. As a consolation to Mrs. Washington in her bereavement, he adopted the two youngest children of the deceased, a boy and girl, who thenceforth formed a part of his immediate family.

From Eltham, Washington proceeded to Mount Vernon; but public cares gave him little leisure to attend to his private concerns. We have seen how repeatedly his steady mind had been exercised in the darkest times of the revolutionary struggle, in buoying up the public heart when sinking into despondency. He had now an opposite task to perform, to guard against an overweening confidence inspired by the recent triumph. In a letter to General Greene, he writes: "I shall remain but a few days here, and shall proceed to Philadelphia, when I shall attempt to stimulate Congress to the best improvement of our late success, by taking the most vigorous and effectual measures to be ready for an early and decisive campaign the next year. My greatest fear is, that

Congress, viewing this stroke in too important a point of light, may think our work too nearly closed, and will fall into a state of languor and relaxation. To prevent this error, I shall employ every means in my power, and if, unhappily, we sink into that fatal mistake, no part of the blame shall be mine."

In a letter written at the same time to Lafayette, who, having obtained from Congress an indefinite leave of absence, was about to sail, he says: "I owe it to your friendship and to my affectionate regard for you, my dear marquis, not to let you leave this country, without carrying with you fresh marks of my attachment to you, and new expressions of the high sense I entertain of your military conduct, and other important services in the course of the last campaign." In reply to inquiries which the marquis had made respecting the operations of the coming year, he declares that everything must depend absolutely for success upon the naval force to be employed in these seas and the time of its appearance. "No land force," writes he, "can act decisively unless it is accompanied by a maritime superiority; nor can more than negative advantages be expected without it. For proof of this we have only to recur to the instances of the ease and facility with which the British shifted their ground, as advantages

were to be obtained at either extremity of the continent, and to their late heavy loss the moment they failed in their naval superiority. . . . A doubt did not exist, nor does it at this moment, in any man's mind, of the total extirpation of the British force in the Carolinas and Georgia, if the Count de Grasse could have extended his co-operation two months longer."

We may add here that Congress, after resolutions highly complimentary to the marquis, had, through the secretary of foreign affairs, recommended to the ministers plenipotentiary of the United States, resident in Europe, to confer with the marquis, and avail themselves of his information relative to the situation of national affairs, which information the various heads of departments were instructed to furnish him; and he was furthermore made the bearer of a letter to his sovereign, recommending him in the strongest terms to the royal consideration. Much was anticipated from the generous zeal of Lafayette, and the influence he would be able to exercise in France, in favor of the American cause.

Towards the end of November, Washington was in Philadelphia, where Congress received him with distinguished honors. He lost no time in enforcing the policy respecting the ensuing campaign, which he had set forth in his

letters to General Greene and the marquis. His views were met by the military committee of Congress, with which he was in frequent consultation, and by the secretaries of war, finance, and public affairs, who attended their conferences. Under his impulse and personal supervision, the military arrangements for 1782 were made with unusual despatch. On the 10th of December resolutions were passed in Congress for requisitions of men and money from the several States; and Washington backed those requisitions by letters to the respective governors, urging prompt compliance. Strenuous exertions, too, were made by Dr. Franklin, then minister in France, to secure a continuance of efficient aid from that power; and a loan of six millions had been promised by the king after hearing of the capitulation of Yorktown.

The persuasion that peace was at hand was, however, too prevalent for the public to be roused to new sacrifices and toils to maintain what was considered the mere shadow of a war. The States were slow in furnishing a small part of their respective quotas of troops, and still slower in answering to the requisitions for money.

After remaining four months in Philadelphia, Washington set out in March to rejoin the army at Newburgh on the Hudson. He was at

Morristown in the Jerseys on the 28th, when a bold project was submitted to him by Colonel Matthias Ogden, of the Jersey line. Prince William Henry,* son of the king of England, who was serving as a midshipman in the fleet of Admiral Digby, was at that time in New York with the admiral, an object of great attention to the army, and the tory part of the inhabitants. The project of Colonel Ogden was to surprise the prince and the admiral at their quarters in the city, and bring them off prisoners. He was to be aided in the enterprise by a captain, a subaltern, three sergeants, and thirty-six men. They were to embark from the Jersey shore on a rainy night in four whale-boats, well manned, and rowed with muffled oars, and were to land in New York at half-past nine, at a wharf not far from the quarters of the prince and admiral, which were in Hanover Square. Part of the men were to guard the boats, while Colonel Ogden with a strong party was to proceed to the house, force the doors if necessary, and capture the prince and admiral. In returning to the boats, part of the men, armed with guns and bayonets, were to precede the prisoners, and part to follow at half a gunshot distance, to give front to the enemy until all were embarked.

* Afterwards William IV.

The plan was approved by Washington, but Colonel Ogden was charged to be careful that no insult or indignity be offered to the prince or admiral, should they be captured. They were, on the contrary, to be treated with all possible respect, and conveyed without delay to Congress.

How far an attempt was made to carry this plan into operation, is not known. An exaggerated alarm seems to have been awakened by extravagant reports circulated in New York, as appears by the following citation from a paper or letter dated April 23d, and transmitted by Washington to Ogden :

"Great seem to be their apprehensions here. About a fortnight ago a number of flat-boats were discovered by a sentinel from the bank of the river (Hudson), which are said to have been intended to fire the suburbs, and in the height of the conflagration to make a descent on the lower part of the city, and wrest from our embraces his Excellency Sir Henry Clinton, Prince William Henry, and several other illustrious personages—since which, great precautions have been taken for the security of those gentlemen, by augmenting the guards, and to render their persons as little exposed as possible."

These precautions very probably disconcerted

the project of Colonel Ogden, of which we find no other traces.

In a recent letter to General Greene, Washington had expressed himself strongly on the subject of retaliation. "Of all laws it is the most difficult to execute, where you have not the transgressor himself in your possession. Humanity will ever interfere, and plead strongly against the sacrifice of an innocent person for the guilt of another."

It was but three or four months after this writing, that his judgment and feelings were put to the proof in this respect. We have had occasion to notice the marauds of the New York refugees in the Jerseys. One of their number by the name of Philip White had been captured by the Jersey people, and killed in attempting to escape from those who were conducting him to Monmouth jail. His partisans in New York determined on a signal revenge. Captain Joseph Huddy, an ardent whig, who had been captured when bravely defending a block-house in Monmouth County, and carried captive to New York, was now drawn forth from prison, conducted into the Jerseys by a party of refugees, headed by a Captain Lippencott, and hanged on the heights of Middletown with a label affixed to his breast, bearing the inscription, "Up goes Huddy for Philip White."

The neighboring country cried out for retaliation. Washington submitted the matter, with all the evidence furnished, to a board of general and field officers. It was unanimously determined that the offender should be demanded for execution, and, if not given up, that retaliation should be exercised on a British prisoner of equal rank. Washington accordingly sent proofs to Sir Henry Clinton of what he stigmatized as a murder, and demanded that Captain Lippencott, or the officer who commanded the execution of Captain Huddy, should be given up; or if that officer should be inferior in rank, so many of the perpetrators as would, according to the tariff of exchange, be an equivalent. "To do this," said he, "will mark the justice of your Excellency's character. In failure of it, I shall hold myself justifiable in the eyes of God and man, for the measure to which I will resort."

Sir Henry declined a compliance, but stated that he had ordered a strict inquiry into the circumstances of Captain Huddy's death and would bring the perpetrators of it to immediate trial.

Washington about the same time received the copy of a resolution of Congress approving of his firm and judicious conduct, in his application to the British general at New York, and

promising to support him "in his fixed purpose of exemplary retaliation."

He accordingly ordered a selection to be made by lot, for the above purpose, from among the British officers, prisoners at Lancaster in Pennsylvania. To enhance the painful nature of the case, the lot fell upon Captain Charles Asgill, of the Guards, a youth only nineteen years of age, of an amiable character and high hopes and expectations, being only son and heir of Sir Charles Asgill, a wealthy baronet.

The youth bore his lot with firmness, but his fellow-prisoners were incensed at Sir Henry Clinton for exposing him to such a fate by refusing to deliver up the culprit. One of their number, a son of the Earl of Ludlow, solicited permission from Washington to proceed to New York and lay the case before Sir Guy Carleton who had succeeded in command to Sir Henry Clinton. In granting it, Washington intimated that, though deeply affected by the unhappy fate to which Captain Asgill was subjected, and devoutly wishing that his life might be spared, there was but one alternative that could save him, of which the British commander must be aware.

The matter remained for some time in suspense. Washington had ordered that Captain

Asgill should be treated "with every tender attention and politeness (consistent with his present situation), which his rank, fortune, and connections, together with his unfortunate state, demanded," and the captain himself acknowledged in writing the feeling and attentive manner in which those commands were executed. But on the question of retaliation Washington remained firm.

Lippencott was at length tried by a court-martial, but, after a long sitting, acquitted, it appearing that he had acted under the verbal orders of Governor Franklin, president of the board of associated loyalists. The British commander reprobated the death of Captain Huddy, and broke up the board.

These circumstances changed in some degree the ground upon which Washington was proceeding. He laid the whole matter before Congress, admitted Captain Asgill on parole at Morristown, and subsequently intimated to the secretary of war his private opinion in favor of his release, with permission to go to his friends in Europe.

In the meantime Lady Asgill, the mother of the youth, had written a pathetic letter to the Count de Vergennes, the French minister of state, imploring his intercession in behalf of her son. The letter was shown to the king

and queen, and by their direction the count wrote to Washington soliciting the liberation of Asgill. Washington, as has been shown, had already suggested his release, and was annoyed at the delay of Congress in the matter. He now referred to that body the communication from the count, and urged a favorable decision. To his great relief, he received their directions to set Captain Asgill at liberty.

This, like the case of the unfortunate André, was one of the painful and trying predicaments in which a strict sense of public duty obliged Washington to do violence to his natural impulses, and he declares in one of his letters, that the situation of Captain Asgill often filled him with the keenest anguish. "I felt for him on many accounts; and not the least when, viewing him as a man of honor and sentiment, I considered how unfortunate it was for him that a wretch who possessed neither, should be the means of causing him a single pang or a disagreeable sensation."

NOTE.

While these pages are going through the press, we have before us an instance of that conscientious regard for justice which governed Washington's conduct.

A favorite aide-de-camp, Colonel Samuel B. Webb, who had been wounded in the battles of Bunker's

Hill and White Plains, was captured in December, 1777, when commanding a Connecticut regiment, and accompanying General Parsons in a descent upon Long Island. He was then but twenty-four years of age, and the youngest colonel in the army. Presuming upon the favor of General Washington, who had pronounced him one of the most accomplished gentlemen in the service, he wrote to him, reporting his capture, and begging most strenuously for an immediate exchange. He received a prompt, but disappointing reply. Washington lamented his unfortunate condition. "It would give me pleasure," said he, "to render you any services in my power, but it is impossible for me to comply with your request, without violating the principles of justice, and incurring a charge of partiality."

In fact, several officers of Colonel Webb's rank had been a long time in durance, and it was a rule with Washington that those first captured should be first released. To this rule he inflexibly adhered, however his feelings might plead for its infringement. Colonel Webb, in consequence, was not exchanged until the present year; when Washington, still on principles of justice, gave him the brevet rank of Brigadier-General and the command of the light infantry.

Chapter XXIII.

Washington Continues his Precautions—Sir Guy Carleton Brings Pacific News—Discontents of the Army—Extraordinary Letter from Colonel Nicola—Indignant Reply of Washington—Joint Letter of Sir Guy Carleton and Admiral Digby—Junction of the Allied Armies on the Hudson—Contemplated Reduction of the Army.

IN disposing of the case of Captain Asgill, we have anticipated dates, and must revert to the time when Washington again established his headquarters at Newburgh on the Hudson. The solicitude felt by him on account of the universal relaxation of the sinews of war, was not allayed by reports of pacific speeches, and motions made in the British Parliament, which might be delusive. "Even if the nation and parliament," said he, "are really in earnest to obtain peace with America, it will, undoubtedly, be wisdom in us to meet them with great caution and circumspection,

and by all means to keep our arms firm in our hands; and instead of relaxing one iota in our exertions, rather to spring forward with redoubled vigor, that we may take the advantage of every favorable opportunity, until our wishes are fully obtained. No nation ever yet suffered in treaty by preparing, even in the moment of negotiation, most vigorously for the field."

Sir Guy Carleton arrived in New York early in May to take the place of Sir Henry Clinton, who had solicited his recall. In a letter dated May 7th, Sir Guy informed Washington of his being joined with Admiral Digby in the commission of peace; he transmitted at the same time printed copies of the proceedings in the House of Commons on the 4th of March, respecting an address to the king in favor of peace; and of a bill reported in consequence thereof, authorizing the king to conclude a peace or truce with the revolted provinces of North America. As this bill, however, had not passed into a law when Sir Guy left England, it presented no basis for a negotiation; and was only cited by him to show the pacific disposition of the British nation, with which he professed the most zealous concurrence. Still, though multiplied circumstances gradually persuaded Washington of a real disposi-

tion on the part of Great Britain to terminate the war, he did not think fit to relax his preparations for hostilities.

Great discontents prevailed at this time in the army, both among officers and men. The neglect of the States to furnish their proportions of the sum voted by Congress for the prosecution of the war, had left the army almost destitute. There was scarce money sufficient to feed the troops from day to day; indeed, there were days when they were absolutely in want of provisions. The pay of the officers, too, was greatly in arrear; many of them doubted whether they would ever receive the half pay decreed to them by Congress for a term of years after the conclusion of the war, and fears began to be expressed that, in the event of peace, they would all be disbanded with their claims unliquidated, and themselves cast upon the community penniless, and unfitted, by long military habitudes, for the gainful pursuits of peace.

At this juncture Washington received an extraordinary letter from Colonel Lewis Nicola, a veteran officer, once commandant of Fort Mifflin, who had been in habits of intimacy with him, and had warmly interceded in behalf of the suffering army. In this letter he attributed all the ills experienced and anticipated

by the army and the public at large, to the existing form of government. He condemned a republican form as incompatible with national prosperity, and advised a mixed government like that of England; which, he had no doubt, on its benefits being properly pointed out, would be readily adopted. "In that case," he adds, "it will, I believe, be uncontroverted, that the same abilities which have led us through difficulties apparently insurmountable by human power, to victory and glory; those qualities that have merited and obtained the universal esteem and veneration of an army, would be most likely to conduct and direct us in the smoother paths of peace. Some people have so connected the idea of tyranny and monarchy, as to find it very difficult to separate them. It may, therefore, be requisite to give the head of such a constitution as I propose, some title apparently more moderate; but, if all other things were once adjusted, I believe strong arguments might be produced for admitting the title of King, which, I conceive, would be attended with some material advantages."

Washington saw at once that Nicola was but the organ of a military faction, disposed to make the army the basis of an energetic government, and to place him at the head.

The suggestion, backed by the opportunity, might have tempted a man of meaner ambition; from him it drew the following indignant letter:

"With a mixture of great surprise and astonishment, I have read with attention the sentiments you have submitted to my perusal. Be assured, sir, no occurrence in the course of the war has given me more painful sensations, than your information of there being such ideas existing in the army, as you have expressed, and I must view with abhorrence, and reprehend with severity. For the present, the communication of them will rest in my own bosom, unless some further agitation of the matter shall make a disclosure necessary.

"I am much at a loss to conceive what part of my conduct could have given encouragement to an address, which to me seems big with the greatest mischiefs that can befall my country. If I am not deceived in the knowledge of myself, you could not have found a person to whom your schemes are more disagreeable. At the same time, in justice to my own feelings, I must add, that no man possesses a more sincere wish to see ample justice done to the army than I do; and as far as my powers and influence, in a constitutional way, extend, they shall be employed to the utmost of my abilities

to effect it, should there be any occasion. Let me conjure you, then, if you have any regard for your country, concern for yourself, or posterity, or respect for me, to banish these thoughts from your mind, and never communicate, as from yourself or any one else, a sentiment of the like nature."

On the 2d of August, Sir Guy Carleton and Admiral Digby wrote a joint letter to Washington, informing him that they were acquainted, by authority, that negotiations for a general peace had already been commenced at Paris, and that the independence of the United States would be proposed in the first instance by the British commissioner, instead of being made a condition of a general treaty.

Even yet, Washington was wary. "From the former infatuation, duplicity, and perverse system of British policy," said he, "I confess I am induced to doubt everything; to suspect everything. . . . Whatever the real intention of the enemy may be, I think the strictest attention and exertion, which have ever been exercised on our part, instead of being diminished, ought to be increased. Jealousy and precaution at least can do no harm. Too much confidence and supineness may be pernicious in the extreme."

What gave force to this policy was, that as

yet no offers had been made on the part of Great Britain, for a general cessation of hostilities, and, although the British commanders were in a manner tied down by the resolves of the House of Commons, to a defensive war only, in the United States, they might be at liberty to transport part of their force to the West Indies, to act against the French possessions in that quarter. With these considerations he wrote to the Count de Rochambeau, then at Baltimore, advising him, for the good of the common cause, to march his troops to the banks of the Hudson, and form a junction with the American army.

The junction took place about the middle of September. The French army crossed the Hudson at King's Ferry to Verplanck's Point, where the American forces were paraded under arms to welcome them. The clothing and arms recently received from France or captured at Yorktown, enabled them to make an unusually respectable appearance. Two lines were formed from the landing-place to headquarters, between which Count Rochambeau passed, escorted by a troop of cavalry ; after which he took his station beside General Washington ; the music struck up a French march, and the whole army passed in review before them.

The French army encamped on the left of

the American, near Crompond, about ten miles from Verplanck's Point. The greatest goodwill continued to prevail between the allied forces, though the Americans had but little means of showing hospitality to their gay Gallic friends. "Only conceive the mortification they must suffer, even the general officers," says Washington in a letter to the secretary of war, "when they cannot invite a French officer, a visiting friend, or a travelling acquaintance, to a better repast than whiskey hot from the still, and not always that, and a bit of beef without vegetables will afford them."

Speaking of a contemplated reduction of the army to take place on the 1st of January: "While I premise," said he, "that no one I have seen or heard of appears opposed to the principle of reducing the army as circumstances may require; yet I cannot help fearing the result of the measure in contemplation, under present circumstances, when I see such a number of men, goaded by a thousand stings of reflection on the past, and of anticipation on the future, about to be turned into the world, soured by penury, and what they call ingratitude of the public, involved in debts, without one farthing of money to carry them home, after having spent the flower of their days, and

many of them their patrimonies, in establishing the freedom and independence of their country, and suffered everything that human nature is capable of enduring on this side of death,—I repeat it, that when I consider these irritating circumstances, without one thing to soothe their feelings or dispel the gloomy prospects, I cannot avoid apprehending that a train of evils will follow, of a very serious and distressing nature. . . .

"I wish not to heighten the shades of the picture so far as the reality would justify me in doing it. I could give anecdotes of patriotism and distress, which have scarcely ever been paralleled, never surpassed in the history of mankind. But you may rely upon it, the patience and long-suffering of this army are almost exhausted, and that there was never so great a spirit of discontent as at this instant. While in the field, I think it may be kept from breaking out into acts of outrage; but when we retire into winter quarters, unless the storm is previously dissipated, I cannot be at ease respecting the consequences. It is high time for a peace."

Chapter XXIV.

Discontents of the Army at Newburgh—Memorial of the Officers to Congress—Anonymous Papers Circulated in the Camp—Meeting of Officers Called—Address of Washington — Resolutions in Consequence—Letters of Washington to the President—His Opinion of the Anonymous Addresses and their Author.

THE anxious fears of Washington in regard to what might take place on the approaching reduction of the army, were in some degree realized. After the meeting with the French army at Verplanck's Point, he had drawn up his forces to his former encampment at Newburgh, where he established his headquarters for the winter. In the leisure and idleness of a winter camp, the discontents of the army had time to ferment. The arrearages of pay became a topic of angry and constant comment, as well as the question, whether the resolution of Congress, granting

half pay to officers who should serve to the end of the war, would be carried into effect. Whence were the funds to arise for such half pay? The national treasury was empty; the States were slow to tax themselves; the resource of foreign loans was nearly exhausted. The articles of confederation required the concurrence of nine States to any act appropriating public money. There had never been nine States in favor of the half pay establishment; was it probable that as many would concur in applying any scanty funds that might accrue, and which would be imperiously demanded for many other purposes, to the payment of claims known to be unpopular, and to the support of men, who, the necessity for their services being at an end, might be regarded as drones in the community?

The result of these boding conferences was a memorial to Congress in December, from the officers in camp, on behalf of the army, representing the hardships of the case, and proposing that a specific sum should be granted them for the money actually due, and as a commutation for half pay. Three officers were deputed to present the memorial to Congress, and watch over and promote its success.

The memorial gave rise to animated and long discussions in Congress. Some members

were for admitting the claims as founded on engagements entered into by the nation ; others were for referring them to the respective States of the claimants. The winter passed away without any definite measures on the subject.

On the 10th of March, 1783, an anonymous paper was circulated through the camp, calling a meeting at eleven o'clock the next day, of the general and field officers, of an officer from each company, and a delegate from the medical staff, to consider a letter just received from their representatives in Philadelphia, and what measures, if any, should be adopted to obtain that redress of grievances which they seemed to have solicited in vain.

On the following morning an anonymous address to the officers of the army was privately put into circulation. It professed to be from a fellow-soldier, who had shared in their toils and mingled in their dangers, and who till very lately had believed in the justice of his country.

"After a pursuit of seven long years," observed he, "the object for which we set out is at length brought within our reach. Yes, my friends, that suffering courage of yours was active once ; it has conducted the United States of America through a doubtful and bloody war ; it has placed her in the chair of independency,

and peace returns to bless—whom? a country willing to redress your wrongs, cherish your worth, and reward your services? a country courting your return to private life, with tears of gratitude and smiles of admiration, longing to divide with you that independency which your gallantry has given, and those riches which your wounds have preserved? Is this the case? or is it rather a country that tramples upon your rights, disdains your cries, and insults your distresses? Have you not more than once suggested your wishes, and made known your wants to Congress—wants and wishes, which gratitude and policy should have anticipated, rather than evaded? And have you not lately, in the meek language of entreating memorials, begged from their justice what you could no longer expect from their favor? How have you been answered? Let the letter, which you are called to consider to-morrow, make reply!

"If this, then, be your treatment, while the swords you wear are necessary for the defense of America, what have you to expect from peace, when your voice shall sink, and your strength dissipate by division; when those very swords, the instruments and companions of your glory, shall be taken from your sides, and no remaining mark of military distinction

left but your wants, infirmities, and scars? Can you then consent to be the only sufferers by this Revolution, and, retiring from the field, grow old in poverty, wretchedness, and contempt? Can you consent to wade through the vile mire of dependency, and owe the miserable remnant of that life to charity, which has hitherto been spent in honor? If you can, go, and carry with you the jest of tories, and the scorn of whigs; the ridicule, and, what is worse, the pity of the world! Go, starve and be forgotten! But if your spirits should revolt at this; if you have sense enough to discover, and spirit sufficient to oppose tyranny, under whatever garb it may assume, whether it be the plain coat of republicanism, or the splendid robe of royalty; if you have yet learned to discriminate between a people and a cause, between men and principles; awake, attend to your situation, and redress yourselves! If the present moment be lost, every future effort is in vain; and your threats then will be as empty as your entreaties now.

"I would advise you, therefore, to come to some final opinion upon what you can bear, and what you will suffer. If your determination be in any proportion to your wrongs, carry your appeal from the justice to the fears of government. Change the milk-and-water style of

your last memorial. Assume a bolder tone, decent, but lively, spirited, and determined; and suspect the man who would advise to more moderation and longer forbearance. Let two or three men, who can feel as well as write, be appointed to draw up your *last remonstrance*, for I would no longer give it the suing, soft, unsuccessful epithet of *memorial*. Let it represent in language that will neither dishonor you by its rudeness, nor betray you by its fears, what has been promised by Congress, and what has been performed; how long and how patiently you have suffered; how little you have asked, and how much of that little has been denied. Tell them, that, though you were the first, and would wish to be the last to encounter danger, though despair itself can never drive you into dishonor, it may drive you from the field; that the wound, often irritated and never healed, may at length become incurable; and that the slightest mark of indignity from Congress now, must operate like the grave, and part you forever; that, in any political event, the army has its alternative. If peace, that nothing shall separate you from your arms but death; if war, that courting the auspices, and inviting the direction of your illustrious leader, you will retire to some unsettled country, smile in your turn, and 'mock

when their fear cometh on.' But let it represent, also, that should they comply with the request of your late memorial, it would make you more happy and them more respectable; that, while war should continue, you would follow their standard into the field; and when it came to an end, you would withdraw into the shade of private life, and give the world another subject of wonder and applause—an army victorious over its enemies, victorious over itself."

This bold and eloquent, but dangerous appeal, founded as it was upon the wrongs and sufferings of a gallant army, and the shameful want of sympathy in tardy legislators, called for the full exercise of Washington's characteristic firmness, caution, and discrimination. In general orders he noticed the anonymous paper, but expressed his confidence that the good sense of officers would prevent them from paying attention to such an irregular invitation; which he reprobated as disorderly. With a view to counteract its effects, he requested a like meeting of officers on the 15th instant, to hear the report of the committee deputed to Congress. "After mature deliberation," added he, "they will devise what further measures ought to be adopted as most rational and best calculated to obtain the just and important object in view."

On the following day another anonymous address was circulated, written in a more moderate tone, but to the same purport with the first, and affecting to construe the general orders into an approbation of the object sought; only changing the day appointed for the meeting. "Till now," it observes, "the commander-in-chief has regarded the steps you have taken for redress with good wishes alone; his ostensible silence has authorized your meetings, and his private opinion sanctified your claims. Had he disliked the object in view, would not the same sense of duty which forbade you from meeting on the third day of the week, have forbidden you from meeting on the seventh? Is not the same subject held up to your view? and has it not passed the seal of office, and taken all the solemnity of an order? This will give system to your proceedings, and stability to your resolves," etc., etc.

On Saturday, the 15th of March, the meeting took place. Washington had previously sent for the officers, one by one, in private, and enlarged on the loss of character to the whole army, that would result from intemperate resolutions. At the meeting, General Gates was called to the chair. Washington rose and apologized for appearing there, which he had not intended to do when he issued the order directing

the assemblage. The diligence, however, which had been used in circulating anonymous writings, rendered it necessary he should give his sentiments to the army on the nature and tendency of them. He had taken this opportunity to do so, and had committed his thoughts to writing, which, with the indulgence of his brother officers, he would take the liberty of reading to them.

He then proceeded to read a forcible and feeling address, pointing out the irregularity and impropriety of the recent anonymous summons, and the dangerous nature of the anonymous address; a production, as he observed, addressed more to the feelings and passions than to the judgment; drawn with great art, calculated to inspire the mind with an idea of premeditated injustice in the sovereign power of the United States, and to rouse all those resentments which must unavoidably flow from such a belief.

On these principles he had opposed the irregular and hasty meeting appointed in the anonymous summons, not from a disinclination to afford officers every opportunity, consistent with their own honor and the dignity of the army, to make known their grievances. "If my conduct heretofore," said he, "has not evinced to you, that I have been a faithful

friend to the army, my declaration of it at this time would be equally unavailing and improper. But as I was among the first who embarked in the cause of our common country; as I have never left your side one moment, but when called from you on public duty; as I have been the constant companion and witness of your distresses, and not among the last to feel and acknowledge your merits; as I have ever considered my own military reputation as inseparably connected with that of the army; as my heart has ever expanded with joy when I have heard its praises, and my indignation has arisen when the mouth of detraction has been opened against it; it can scarcely be supposed at this last stage of the war that I am indifferent to its interests. . . .

"For myself," observes he, in another part of his address, "a recollection of the cheerful assistance and prompt obedience I have experienced from you under every vicissitude of fortune, and the sincere affection I feel for an army I have so long had the honor to command, will oblige me to declare in this public and solemn manner, that for the attainment of complete justice for all your toils and dangers, and the gratification of every wish, so far as may be done consistently with the great duty I owe my country and those powers we are

bound to respect, you may fully command my services to the utmost extent of my abilities.

"While I give you these assurances, and pledge myself in the most unequivocal manner to exert whatever abilities I am possessed of in your favor, let me entreat you, gentlemen, on your part, not to take any measures which, viewed in the calm light of reason, will lessen the dignity and sully the glory you have hitherto maintained; let me request you to rely on the plighted faith of your country, and place a full confidence in the purity of the intentions of Congress; that, previous to your dissolution as an army, they will cause all your accounts to be fairly liquidated, as directed in the resolutions which were published to you two days ago; and that they will adopt the most effectual measures in their power to render ample justice to you for your faithful and meritorious services. And let me conjure you, in the name of our common country, as you value your own sacred honor, as you respect the rights of humanity, and as you regard the military and national character of America, to express your utmost horror and detestation of the man who wishes, under any specious pretenses, to overturn the liberties of our country; and who wickedly attempts to open the floodgates of civil discord, and deluge our rising

empire in blood. By thus determining and thus acting, you will pursue the plain and direct road to the attainment of your wishes; you will defeat the insidious designs of our enemies, who are compelled to resort from open force to secret artifice; you will give one more distinguished proof of unexampled patriotism and patient virtue rising superior to the pressure of the most complicated sufferings; and you will, by the dignity of your conduct, afford occasion for posterity to say, when speaking of the glorious example you have exhibited to mankind: 'Had this day been wanting, the world had never seen the last stage of perfection to which human nature is capable of attaining.'"

After he had concluded the address, he observed, that as a corroborating testimony of the good disposition in Congress toward the army, he would communicate to them a letter received from a worthy member of that body, who on all occasions had approved himself their fast friend. He produced an able letter from the Hon. Joseph Jones, which, while it pointed out the difficulties and embarrassments of Congress, held up very forcibly the idea that the army would at all events be generously dealt with.

Major Shaw, who was present, and from

whose memoir we note this scene, relates that Washington, after reading the first paragraph of the letter, made a short pause, took out his spectacles, and begged the indulgence of his audience while he put them on, observing at the same time that *he had grown gray in their service, and now found himself growing blind.* "There was something," adds Shaw, "so natural, so unaffected in this appeal, as rendered it superior to the most studied oratory; it forced its way to the heart, and you might see sensibility moisten every eye."

"Happy for America," continues Major Shaw, "that she has a patriot army, and equally so that Washington is its leader. I rejoice in the opportunity I have had of seeing this great man in a variety of situations—calm and intrepid when the battle raged; patient and persevering under the pressure of misfortune; moderate and possessing himself in the full career of victory. Great as these qualifications deservedly render him, he never appeared to me more truly so than at the assembly we have been speaking of. On other occasions he has been supported by the exertions of an army and the countenance of his friends; but on this he stood single and alone. There was no saying where the passions of an army which were not a little inflamed, might lead; but it

was generally allowed that further forbearance was dangerous, and moderation had ceased to be a virtue. Under these circumstances he appeared, not at the head of his troops, but, as it were, in opposition to them ; and for a dreadful moment the interests of the army and its general seemed to be in competition ! He spoke—every doubt was dispelled, and the tide of patriotism rolled again in its wonted course. Illustrious man ! What he says of the army may with equal justice be applied to his own character : 'Had this day been wanting, the world had never seen the last stage of perfection to which human nature is capable of attaining.'" *

The moment Washington retired from the assemblage, a resolution was moved by the warm-hearted Knox, seconded by General Putnam, and passed unanimously, assuring him that the officers reciprocated his affectionate expressions with the greatest sincerity of which the human heart is capable. Then followed resolutions, declaring that no circumstances of distress or danger should induce a conduct calculated to sully the reputation and glory acquired at the price of their blood and eight years' faithful services ; that they continued to have an unshaken confidence in the justice of

* Quincy's *Memoir of Major Shaw*, p. 104.

Congress and their country; and that the commander-in-chief should be requested to write to the President of Congress, earnestly entreating a speedy decision on the late address forwarded by a committee of the army.

A letter was accordingly written by Washington, breathing that generous yet well-tempered spirit, with which he ever pleaded the cause of the army.

"The result of the proceedings of the grand convention of officers," said he, "which I have the honor of inclosing to your Excellency for the inspection of Congress, will, I flatter myself, be considered as the last glorious proof of patriotism which could have been given by men who aspired to the distinction of a patriot army, and will not only confirm their claim to the justice, but will increase their title to the gratitude of their country.

"Having seen the proceedings on the part of the army terminate with perfect unanimity, and in a manner entirely consonant to my wishes; being impressed with the liveliest sentiments of affection for those who have so long, so patiently, and so cheerfully suffered and fought under my immediate direction; having, from motives of justice, duty, and gratitude, spontaneously offered myself as an advocate for their rights; and having been requested to

write to your Excellency, earnestly entreating the most speedy decision of Congress upon the subjects of the late address from the army to that honorable body; it only remains for me to perform the task I have assumed, and to intercede on their behalf, as I now do, that the sovereign power will be pleased to verify the predictions I have pronounced, and the confidence the army have reposed in the justice of their country."

After referring to further representations made by him to Congress, on the subject of a half pay to be granted to officers for life, he adds: "If, besides the simple payment of their wages, a further compensation is not due to the sufferings and sacrifices of the officers, then have I been mistaken indeed. If the whole army had not merited whatever a grateful people can bestow, then I have been beguiled by prejudice and built opinion on the basis of error. If this country should not, in the event, perform everything which has been requested in the last memorial to Congress, then will my belief become vain, and the hope that has been excited, void of foundation. And if, as has been suggested for the purpose of inflaming their passions, the officers of the army are to be the only sufferers by the Revolution; if, retiring from the field, they are to

grow old in poverty, wretchedness, and contempt; if they are to wade through the vile mire of dependency, and owe the miserable remnant of that life to charity, which has hitherto been spent in honor; then shall I have learned what ingratitude is, then shall I have realized a tale which will embitter every moment of my future life. But I am under no such apprehensions. A country, rescued by their arms from impending ruin, will never leave unpaid the debt of gratitude."

This letter to the President was accompanied by other letters to members of Congress; all making similar direct and eloquent appeals. The subject was again taken up in Congress, nine States concurred in a resolution commuting the half pay into a sum equal to five years' whole pay; and the whole matter, at one moment so fraught with danger to the public, through the temperate wisdom of Washington, was happily adjusted.

The anonymous addresses to the army, which were considered at the time so insidious and inflammatory, and which certainly were ill-judged and dangerous, have since been avowed by General John Armstrong, a man who has sustained with great credit to himself various eminent posts under our government. At the time of writing them he was a young man,

aide-de-camp to General Gates, and he did it at the request of a number of his fellow-officers, indignant at the neglect of their just claims by Congress, and in the belief that the tardy movements of that body required the spur and the lash. Washington, in a letter dated 23d January, 1797, says: "I have since had sufficient reason for believing that the object of the author was just, honorable, and friendly to the country, though the means suggested by him were certainly liable to much misunderstanding and abuse."

END OF VOLUME VI.

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